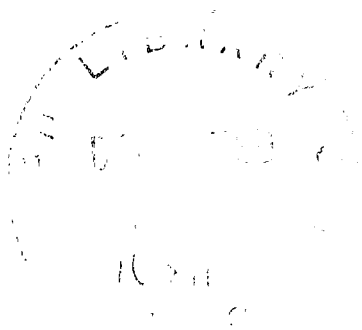
A STUDY IN AUGUSTINE AND CALVIN OF THE CHURCH REGARDED AS THE NUMBER OF THE ELECT AND AS THE BODY OF THE BAPTIZED



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Preface

For the greater part of the history of the Christian Church the doctrines of baptism and predestination have been uneasy bed-fellows. At times, the former has gained the predominance and the latter has been relegated to the region of philosophical prolegomena to faith, having no immediate connection with the Christian life. In other periods, the doctrine of predestination has gained the ascendency and the importance of baptism has been minimized. Nevertheless, both these aspects of the Christian faith are strikingly present in the New Testament, and in no way do we find there premonitions of the tensions between them in the later history of the Church. Is this because of the unsystematic nature of the New Testament faith which evaded these difficulties through its own lack of order, or is there a deeper reason for the primitive harmony between these two aspects of Christian theology?

Our task in this study is to investigate the relationships between the two doctrines in two of the Church's greatest theologians - Augustine and Calvin. The former is the real fountainhead of the distinctive Western theological tradition both Catholic and Protestant, while the latter is the great foundation theologian of the Reformed faith. Both men sought to do justice to these two aspects of the Christian faith, and neither consciously attempted to stress one doctrine to the detriment of

the other. Yet in both theologians the harmonious relationship between the two aspects of the Christian faith prevailing in the New Testament was not present. Both were able to hold the two elements together in their doctrinal structure, but as we trace this, it only becomes too apparent that the unity there is not the same as that of the New Testament. To discover the root of this difference is our task in this study. If we discover it, we shall have gained some insight by which we can relate these two facets of the Christian faith in our own theological understanding.

It may, however, be asked why in the twentieth century we should still concern ourselves about the connection between baptism and predestination in relation to our understanding of the Church. Is not the very idea of predestination a perversion of the Christian faith which can be dispensed with by the Church today? Any candid reading of the New Testament, however, will convince one that the idea of predestination is deeply embodied in that book, and when one realizes the part the doctrine has played in the development of Christian thought through the centuries, there comes the realization that to cast aside this aspect of the faith is to break with historic Christianity. Furthermore, let it be realized that most of the arguments against the doctrine of predestination which are advanced (at least on a popular level) today have been very well answered by its classical exponents centuries ago. At the same time, most of us do not

feel happy concerning the classical expositions of the doctrine and their relationship to other aspects of Christian theology. Yet we cannot get rid of the doctrine by refurbishing the arguments of its opponents of long ago; weapons can be sharpened on both sides, but that does not guarantee a decisive result. Rather it is the task of the Christian theologian to explore a classical exposition of a doctrine from within, to be criticized by it, in order that he may afterwards criticize it. A doctrine can only be rejected if it is shown to be theologically unsound, not just because we emotionally dislike it.

In this study we shall attempt to explore the relationship between baptism and predestination in relation to the understanding of the Church in Augustine and Calvin, so that in tracing the roots of their doctrine we may gain some evidence to judge the theological validity of their syntheses. That, in our opinion, is the only method of theological advance.

Abbreviations in References

Unless otherwise stated, the Roman numerals after the book and paragraph references are to the volume in Migne "Patrologia Latina" when the reference is to the Latin Fathers, and to the volume in the collected works of Calvin in the Corpus Reformatorum (Brunswick) when the reference is to the writings of the reformer.

When references are taken from other editions, the following abbreviations are used:

A.C.W. - Ancient Christian Writers (Westminster, Maryland and London).

C.C. - Corpus Christianorum (Turnholt).

C.T.S. - Calvin Translation Society (London).

G.C.S. - Die griechischen christlichen Schriftsteller der ersten drei Jahrhunderte (Leipzig).

M.P.G. - Migne "Patrologia Graeca-Latina".

V. - Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum (Vienna).

All page references to the Apostolic Fathers are from the one volume edition of J. B. Lightfoot (London 1891).

E.T. - English translation.

Chapter I.

The Earlier Teaching of St. Augustine on Grace and Election

A distinction is often made between the earlier and later views of St. Augustine on the questions of grace and election. It is quite easy to show that certain of Augustine's earlier declarations on these subjects can be construed in a Pelagian sense, a fact which was pointed out in his own lifetime by his opponents. It is usual also to defend Augustine by explaining these statements as a result of his liberation from Manichaean determinism through Platonic philosophy - a reaction which was afterwards countered by his study of the Scriptures and Church tradition. At the same time, a simple acceptance of such a position is not really possible for us. In the first place, it is doubtful whether St. Augustine himself would have agreed with such an outline of his development. Occasionally, he does censure his former opinions upon these matters[1], but nevertheless his censures are neither so prolonged nor as frequent as we should expect.[2] In certain of his more important works of this period, his sole defence of questionable passages is to insist that they should be taken in the strict context of intention, and interpreted in the light of certain other passages in the same work.

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1. cf. Retrac. I. xxii. 2 p.108 (V); De Praed. Sanct. I. iii. 7. XLIV c.964.

2. "No single text either in 'De Libero Arbitrio' or in 'De Duabus Animabus', where his formal Pelagian-sounding definitions of evil and sin are passed in review, suffers 'reprehensio'." J. Burnaby, "The 'Retractiones' of St. Augustine: Self-criticism or Apology" in Augustinus Magister, Congrès International Augustinien 1954 Communications, (Paris, 1954), p.89.

This fact is all the more remarkable, when we remember that Augustine wrote his Retractiones in the midst of his controversy with Julian of Eclanum. Naturally, therefore, his ears would be especially sensitive to any Pelagian nuances in his own writings, while the attitude of detachment and candour which pervades the Retractiones prevents us from thinking that Augustine was really trying to suppress the evidence.

Moreover, we have also to account for the remarkable phenomenon that in the De Diversis Quaestionibus ad Simplicianum, written almost fifteen years before the start of the Pelagian controversy, we have the mature Augustinian position in outline on grace and election. This fact can only be accounted for by believing that in the years following his conversion Augustine was really wrestling hard with the question in connection with which he made his greatest contribution to the Christian tradition. We may expect, therefore, from the study of his early writings to gain some insight into the wrestling and elements from which his mature position was later constructed.

It is usual to attribute the libertarian elements in the earlier thought of Augustine to Platonism, and though there is probably considerable truth in this, it is not necessarily so. There is also a deterministic strain in Platonism, which particularly comes to the fore when that philosophical tradition comes into contact with Stoicism, and can be detected in such a thinker as Clement of Alexandria.[1] This strain is not entirely

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1. See the discussion in G. Bardy, La Theologie de l'Église de saint Irénée au concile de Nicée, (Paris, 1947), pp.111-128.

absent from the earlier thought of Augustine: in the Soliloquies he speaks of Wisdom only allowing herself to be embraced by "paucissimis et electissimis amatoribus suis".[1] It can be seen therefore that Augustine's stress on election does not stem entirely from his Paulinism.

The first early treatise of Augustine which we shall consider in detail is De Libero Arbitrio, a work which he informs us arose out of discussions which took place while he was still in Rome. Books II and III, however, were not completed until after he had been ordained presbyter (presumably also before he was raised to the episcopate).[2] The work is based on the presupposition: "optime namque de Deo existimare verissimum est pietatis exordium"[3], therefore, God must not be thought of in any way as the author of evil.

Because of this presupposed justice of God, an action can only be regarded as either sinful or righteous if it is done voluntarily.[4] The will, however, is only a "medium bonum", not like a virtue which is a good in itself and cannot be used for an evil purpose.[5] The movement of the soul is unlike that of a stone cast into the

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1. Sol. I. xiii. 22. XXXII c. 881.
2. Retrac. I. viii. 1. pp.36-7 (V).
3. De Lib. Arb. I. ii. 5. XXXII. c. 1224.
4. Ibid. II. i. 3. XXXII. c. 1241. and III. xviii. 50 c. 1295.
5. Ibid. II. xix. 52 XXXII. c. 1268.

air impelled by something external to itself, for its motion is its own and is originated by itself:

> in eoque similis est illi motui quo deorsum versus lapis fertur, quod sicut proprius est lapidis, sic ille animi: verumtamen in eo dissimilis, quod in potestate non habet lapis cohibere motum quo fertur inferius; animus vero dum non vult, non ita movetur, ut superioribus desertis inferiora diligat.[1]

The fact that we will proves that we possess a will.[2] The will, however, can fall by turning away from the unchangeable and common good to some private good or something external or inferior, yet this "aversio" or "conversio" is not forced but arises out of the will.[3] Augustine refuses to go back further seeking some cause of an evil will anterior to the will itself. An evil will cannot arise out of nature as it is hostile to nature.[4] It appears that to Augustine the evil will, turning away from the highest good, and hence from the fullness of Being, was an inexplicable surd. On his own Platonist principles it was really incomprehensible - how could non-being really tempt the will away from the Good? Towards the end of the work, Augustine puts forward the rather tentative suggestion that for Adam there was a neutral state of indeterminacy in which the will

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1. De Lib. Arb. III. i. 2. XXXII c. 1271-2.
2. Ibid. III. iii. 7. XXXII c.1274.
3. Ibid. II. xix. 53. XXXII c. 1269.
4. Ibid. III. xvii. 48, 49. XXXII c. 1294, 5.

was involved, and yet in which it was directed neither towards wisdommor towards folly.[1] Augustine does not develop this idea, otherwise, no doubt, he would have perceived its difficulties. He realizes, however, that Adam's original condition has no real relevance for the ordinary state of man:

> nunc autem quia ita est, non est bonus, nec habet in potestate ut bonus sit, sive non videnda qualis esse debeat, sive videndo et non valendo esse, qualem debere esse se videt: poenam istam esse quis dubitet?[2]

Every man exists under the two penal conditions, ignorance and difficulty[3], and he goes on to declare "Cum autem de libera voluntate recte faciendi loquimur, de illa scilicet in qua homo factus est loquimur".[4] Out of this situation, it is really impossible for man to arise[5]; indeed man perhaps ought not to be held guilty except for the fact that he refuses the profferred aid of Christ.[6] Augustine wavers in this work as to whether it is possible for man to return to God, and seems to conclude that our real guilt lies in not turning to Christ and that any of the descendents of Adam "potuit etiam superare quod nata est".[7]

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1. De Lib. Arb. III. xxiv. 73. XXXII c. 1307.
2. Ibid. III. xviii. 51. XXXII c. 1296.
3. Ibid. III. xviii. 52. XXXII c. 1296.
4. Ibid. III. xviii. 52. XXXII c. 1296.
5. Ibid. II. xx. 54. XXXII c. 1270.
6. Ibid. III. xix. 53. XXXII c. 1297.
7. Ibid. III. xx. 55. XXXII c. 1297.

Perhaps even more interesting than the rather ambiguous teaching on human freedom contained in De Libero Arbitrio is the theodicy implied in the work. Not that Augustine attempts to give a completely satisfying explanation of the whole of evil in the world, for he is perfectly willing to take final refuge in the thought that the goodness, justice and power of God are beyond our conception.[1] Nevertheless, central to his thought on this matter, is the concept of the "great chain of being" - if there were no souls either capable of sinning or not sinning, the universe would be defective.[2] Even the wretchedness of sinful souls contributes to the perfection of the universe:

> sic etiam differentias animarum cogites, in quibus hoc quoque valere cognoscas, ut universitatis perfectioni nec illae desint animae, quae miserae fieri debuerunt, quia peccatrices esse voluerunt.[3]

At the same time Augustine argues that whether we sin or not, the perfection of the universe is not decreased, as all sin is justly punished and virtue rewarded.[4] Moreover, it is not for man to protest against his lot, and wish that he had not been created at all rather than to have been created wretched; even the most miserable soul does not wish to pass completely out of

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1. De Lib. Arb. III. ii. 5. XXXII c. 1273.
2. Ibid. III. xi. 32. XXXII c. 1287.
3. Ibid. III. ix. 25. XXXII c. 1283.
4. Ibid. III. ix. 26. XXXII c. 1284.

existence[1], and besides even the worst soul is higher than the highest corporeal object - light.[2]

In this treatise, we can see that Augustine's view of the world is optimistic. Platonic emanation and the view of evil as "privatio boni" enable him to side-track the problem of the misery of fallen souls, though it raises for him the further problem as to why the soul should fall at all in the first place. When he finds himself inveigled into a really difficult problem as that concerning the bodily torments of infants[3], he can satisfy himself by saying that no doubt God has a beneficent intention behind it as e.g., using the sufferings of the children to soften the hearts of their parents, and besides who knows what recompense God has in store for these children because of their undeserved sufferings. The comparison of the easygoing treatment of the problem in this work with the agonized questioning of his letter to Jerome twenty years later[4], shows the increased depth of his understanding of the problem of evil.

In his Retractiones Augustine declares that this work did not deal with the operation of the Grace of God. We can detect great difference of tone, interest and attitude from those of his

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1. De Lib. Arb. III. vi. 18. XXXII c. 1280.
2. Ibid. III. v. 16. XXXII c. 1278-9.
3. Ibid. III. xxiii. 68. XXXII c. 1304.
4. Ep. CLXVI.

mature writings, yet we can also detect some of the ideas which were later developed into his mature thought. We find some use of the idea of "occulta justitia", the view that mankind is in a state of penal affliction, and the all-pervading emphasis that God's will cannot be thwarted. The main difference between this and his later work lies in that the determinism here is that of nature rather than of grace; man's freedom is regarded as primarily a natural gift, rather than as arising out of man's being under grace - hence it is conceived of in terms of indeterminacy rather than inward 'justitia'.

A similar strong emphasis on man's free-will is found in the early anti-Manichaean works where Augustine seeks to argue that a soul evil by nature could not possibly commit sin. In the strongest possible language, Augustine insists that a person can only be held responsible for actions from which he could abstain:

> dicere autem peccare sine voluntate, magnum deliramentum est; et peccati reum tenere quemquam, quia non fecit quod facere non potuit summae iniquitatis est et insaniae.[1]

The will is defined in the same work as follows:

> Voluntas est animi motus, cogente nullo, ad aliquid vel non amittendum, vel adipiscendum.[2]

a definition, which according to the Retractiones only refers to the will of the unfallen Adam.[3] Though we may suspect that this

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1. De Dua Animabus contra Manichaeum xii. 17. 42. c. 107.

2. Ibid. x. 14. 42. c. 104.

3. Retractiones I. xiv. 4. pp.74-5 (V).

comment is but a retrojection of Augustine's later thinking, nevertheless, the idea that mankind lost its free-will in the fullest sense of the word in the fall of Adam does occur in these early Anti-Manichaean works:

> Liberum voluntatis arbitrium in illo homine fuisse dico, qui primus formatus est. Ille sic factus est, ut nihil omnino voluntate ejus resisteret, si vellet Dei praecapta servare. Postquam autem ipse libera voluntate peccavit, nos in necessitatem praecipitati sumus, qui ab ejus stirpe descendimus[1]

It is from this period too that one of his most graphic descriptions of original sin appears: after describing the force of custom upon men's lives, he goes on to say: "et hoc est quod adversus animam pugnat, consuetudo facta in carne".[2] At the same time, quite a number of passages in these works have almost a "Pelagian" sound[3], and it is interesting also to notice how he avoids the question of predestination when Fortunatus charges God with cruelty for sending a soul which he foreknew was destined to misery to a body.[4] What is important about these works, however, is not the seeming Pelagianism of certain statements, but that several of his later key-ideas are there already: original sin

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1. Acta seu disputatio contra Fortunatum Manichaeum xxii. XLII c. 124.

2. Ibid. xxii XLII c.125.

3. E.g., Actua seu disput. c. Fortunatum Man. xvii XLII c. 119, De Duabus Animabus x. 12. XLII c.

4. Acta seu disput. c. Fort. Man. xxviii. XLII. c. 128.

and the view that human free-will was lost in the fall of Adam.

It is, however, as we may expect, in his exegetical works of this period that we can best trace the Biblical influences on his thinking. In his Expositionum quarumdam propositionum ex Epistola ad Romanos, Augustine describes the four possible stages of man's life: "ante Legem", "sub Lege", "sub gratia", "in pace". "Ante Legem" one follows unresistingly the impulses of the flesh, "sub Lege" one resists them but is overcome by them, "sub gratia" the impulses are still there but are gradually overcome by our strivings assisted by grace, while "in pace" the conflict is finally over.[1] Grace gives us forgiveness of past sins, aids our strivings, inspires us with a love of justice and takes away fear.[2] Grace, however, does not give us the wish to act rightly, but only the power to do so; the wish comes from the remnant of free-will left in fallen man: "non est liberum arbitrium ut non peccemus, sed tantum ut peccare nolimus".[3] His thought on this subject is illuminated for us by his comment on Romans 7:19-20, which he interprets as concerning man "sub Lege" (a view afterwards revised in the Retractiones): man is unable to live rightly from his own powers without the assistance of the grace of God. Nevertheless, by his free will he may have faith

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1. Expos. quar. prop. xiii - xviii XXXV. c. 2065-6.

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid. xiii - xviii XXXV. c. 2066.

in the Saviour and receive grace.[1]

In expounding Romans 8:28-30, Augustine gives us his first clear utterances on the question of predestination. Although all the elect have been called, it is clear that not all the called are justified. Only those are justified, who are called "secundum propositum" and "propositum autem Dei accipiendum est, non ipsorum".[2] God does not predestinate any whom He foreknows will not believe and follow His calling.[3] Augustine develops this approach in dealing with the election of Jacob and the reprobation of Esau: God elected Jacob because he knew what he would become, though the text refuses to let us believe that this is due to prescience of future works. No man can claim merit because of his good works for they are due to the operation of the Holy Spirit. Nevertheless, the Holy Spirit is only given to those who believe, so:

> Non ergo elegit Deus opera cujusquam in praescientia, quae ipse daturus est; sed fidem elegit in praescientia: ut quem sibi crediturum esse praescivit, ipsum elegerit cui Spiritum sanctum daret, ut bona operando etiam vitam consequeretur.[4]

It is our part to believe and to wish, but it is God's to send the Holy Spirit into our hearts so that we may act rightly[5];

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1. Expos. quar. prop. xliv XXXV. c. 2071.
2. Ibid. lv XXXV. c. 2076.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid. lx XXXV. c. 2079.
5. Ibid.

nevertheless, it is not possible for us to will unless we are called. God elects those who in faith respond to His call, while those who reject it in unbelief as did Pharaoh, he rightly condemns:

> cum tamen homini non auferatur liberum voluntatis arbitrium, sive ad credendum Deo ut consequatur nos misericordia, sive ad impietatem consequatur supplicium.[1]

Much the same type of belief underlies the answers of De Diversis Quaestionibus Octoginta Tribus. In some ways the thought is more severe; the phrase "massa peccati" is used concerning human nature which fell in Adam, and it is argued that no member of this "massa", to whom only damnation is owing, has a right to reply against God.[2] Faith is thought of in no way as a merit, but rather as the instrumental means by which the sinner is prepared for merit.[3] Then strangely enough, Augustine goes on to argue that it is not unjust for God to have mercy on some and harden others:

> Venit enim de occultissimis meritis; quia et ipsi peccatores cum propter generale peccatum unam fecerint, non tamen nulla est inter illos diversitas. Praecedit ergo aliquid in peccatoribus, quo quamvis nondum sint justificati, digni efficiantur justificatione; et item praecedit in aliis peccatoribus quo digni sunt obtusione.[4]

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1. Expos. quar. prop. lxii. XXXV. c. 2080.
2. De Quaest. oct. trib. lxviii. 3. XL c. 71.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid. lxviii. 4. XL c. 72.

He goes on to suggest that no-one is called "ad pacem" unless his will is already prepared beforehand, but the will cannot be made ready unless it has first been influenced by God either internally or externally. Those who respond to the call ought not to take the credit to themselves, for they could not come to God unless they were first called, while they who do not respond have only themselves to blame for refusal. The upshot of the whole argument is:

> Ad misericordiam pertinet vocatio: ad judicium pertinet beatitudo eorum qui venerunt vocati, et supplicium eorum qui venire noluerunt.[1]

In all these early works, one has the feeling that Augustine's thought is tentative; he is aware of the problems raised by the Biblical statements concerning the operation of Grace, and he is trying various lines of approach to solve them. He speaks of the remnant of free-will left to fallen man so that "sub lege" he does not wish to sin, and also that man has the power to respond by faith to the calling of God. In regard to election he can talk of the "occultissimis meritis" of the elect. The same tentativeness of thought marks some of his argument in De Diversis Quaestionibus ad Simplicianum, but halfway through the second "Quaestio" his argument develops into a forthright exposition of the mature Augustinian teaching on grace.

In the first "Quaestio" concerning the exposition of Romans

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1. De Quaest. oct. trib. lxviii. 5. XL c. 73.

7:7-25, he again treats the experience described in the passage as concerning man "sub lege". The law creates anxiety within us for our sins, increases our desire to commit forbidden actions, and yet at the same time deepens our sense of guilt. The sin which dwells in the flesh is "natura et consuetudo conjuncta" which makes our cupidity strong and invincible.[1] We still possess free will, but it is a part of our penal condition that we cannot do that which is good.[2] There is, however, one thing left for free will to perform: to turn with humble piety to Him who can give him the power to fulfil the good intentions of the will.[3] In this "Quaestio" it is impossible to see any real advance on the positions taken up in the earlier exegetical works.

The second "Quaestio" on Romans 9:10-29 commences in a similarly tentative manner. No man is to think that he has received grace because of his good works, instead he could only perform good works when he has received grace through faith. A man receives grace from the moment he is moved to believe in God, though saving grace is not received until he is incorporated into the Church through the sacraments:

> Fiunt ergo inchoates quaedam fidei conceptionibus similes; non tamen solum concipi, sed etiam nasci opus est, ut ad vitam perveniatur aeternam.[4]

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1. De Diversis Quaest. ad Simplic. I. i. 10. XL. c. 106.
2. Ibid. I. i. 11. XL. c. 107.
3. Ibid. I. i. 14. XL. c. 108.
4. Ibid. I. ii. 2. XL. c. 112.

Augustine then goes on to show that there is no conceivable reason why Esau should not be elected while Jacob was. Almost as an aside, he remarks that the entirely different destinies of the two brothers born at the same time is a perfect refutation of astrologers who seek to draw up horoscopes according to the stars at a person's birth.[1] The text forbids us to think that Jacob was elected because God foresaw his future works, while to say that he was elected because of his foreseen faith is equally useless, because if God elects because of foreseen faith, He could equally as well elect for foreseen works.[2] He goes on to argue, as in De Diversis Quaestionibus octoginta tribus that faith cannot be regarded as a merit, because it is impossible to believe unless one has first been called.[3] Nevertheless, faith itself is the gift of God - and here Augustine for the first time uses to full effect the text which played such a large part in his thinking concerning grace: "Quid enim habes, quod non accepisti".[4] Esau could not have been rejected because he was unwilling to accept God's call, for God gives us both the power to will and also the object we will; besides Esau was rejected before he was able either to will or not.[5] Proceeding

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1. De Div. Quaest. ad Simplic. I. ii. 3. XL. c.112.
2. Ibid. I. ii. 5. XL. c. 114.
3. Ibid. I. ii. 7. XL. c. 115.
4. Ibid. I. ii. 9. XL. c. 116.
5. Ibid. I. ii. 10. XL. c. 117.

in his rather devious argument, Augustine quotes Phil. 2:12-13, and concludes:

> quia nisi ejus adjutorio non possumus adipisci quod volumus, sed ideo potius, quia nisi ejus vocatione non volumus.[1]

The great hurdle between the earlier and mature Augustinian positions on the question of grace has now been overcome. Still, however, various problems remain to be faced. If God's calling is the effectual cause of the good will, why is it that "Many are called, but few are chosen". Augustine replies that though many are called, only the chosen are called "congruenter", i.e. in such a way that they will obey.[2] God has called His chosen in many different ways, who is able to say that He would not have been able to call Esau "congruenter" if he had so desired.[3] Nevertheless, those whom God does not call, are not made worse by God, but are left in their own sinful condition.[4] Such

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1. De Div. Quaest. ad Simplic. I. ii. 12. XL. c. 118.

2. Ibid. I. ii. 13. XL. c. 118-9.

3. Ibid. I. ii. 14. XL. c. 119.

4. The following judgment of Salgueiro applies at least to this stage of Augustinian teaching on predestination: "Le second aspect c'est à dire la damnation, ne peut être appelé predestination que dans un sens tres large. En effet, dans la conception augustinienne, ce n'est pas Dieu qui condamne les hommes à la perdition. Il ne fait qu'appliquer une peine méritée aussi, pour bien marquer le rôle de Dieu dans la damnation, Augustin emploie parfois les terms 'improbatio et improbatus', qui traduisent mieux sa pensée que 'reprobatio, reprobatus'." La doctrine de saint Augustin sur la Grâce d'après le traité à Simplicien, (Strasbourg, 1925), pp.100-101.

election or non-election is not unjust, as all men are under a debt of punishment to God for Adam's transgression.[1] Nevertheless, even Esau is not hated as a man, but only insofar as he is a sinner.[2]

At the end of the "Quaestio", Augustine harks back to the question of free will, which he dismisses perhaps too quickly by asking what value is it to those who are sold under sin.[3] Finally he declares that it is impossible for men to distinguish the elect, for grace is free and all-powerful and we, therefore, cannot judge its workings by our standards. On this note of awe and mystery the treatise ends.

In his review of De Quaestionibus ad Simplicianum in the Retractiones, Augustine declares concerning the second "Quaestio": "in cuius quaestionis solutione laboratum est quidem pro libero arbitrio voluntatis humanae, sed vicit Dei gratia".[4] That judgment might very well be applied to the whole of Augustine's works of this period. We cannot trace any direct line of advance - in fact any attempt to do so is vitiated at the outset by the impossibility of dating with any accuracy the various works. Nevertheless, we are able to view Augustine collecting and

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1. De Div. Quaest. ad Simplic. I. ii. 16-17. LX. c. 120-122.
2. Ibid. I. ii. 18. LX. c. 122-4.
3. Ibid. I. ii. 21. LX. c. 126.
4. Retractiones II. xxvii p.132 (V).

assembling the various elements from which his mature doctrine was composed, and notice the ever-decreasing part assigned to human free will, until at last, he can write "liberum voluntatis arbitrium ..... imo vero est quidem, sed in venumdatis sub peccato quid valet?"[1] By the time of Ad Simplicianum, the process is practically complete; as Salgueiro has written:

> Jusqu'à 397, tout dépend de l'homme, qui par sa bonne volonté et par sa foi peut mériter d'être appelé de cette manière; après cette date, tout dépend de Dieu, qui peut tout accorder même la bonne volonté, ou ne rien accorder.[2]

Pelagius as compared with Arius was in an unfortunate position; his opponent had no need to rethink his position, he had only to explore in detail the beliefs he already held from deep intellectual and spiritual conviction.

At the beginning of this chapter, we noticed that Augustine had occasion to censure very few of his early statements concerning grace when he came to write the Retractiones. Perhaps now, we can see the reason for this; Augustine really had to discard very little, for all that he had generally to do was to transfer the beliefs he already held into a different and more comprehensive setting. He did not really abandon his various beliefs, but he had to re-orientate them, so as to fit them into an all-embracing pattern of the Divine sovereignty which the

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1. De Div. Quaest. ad Simplic. I. ii. 21. XL. c. 126.

2. Salgueiro, op. cit., pp.137-8.

Biblical witness and his own personal experience compelled him to accept. That is why he can often defend a passage of doubtful sound, by insisting that it should be brought into relationship with another passage in the same work. We can see therefore that two factors were present in the development of Augustine's doctrine of grace in this period; firstly, a widening assessment of the problem, and secondly, the building of the structure by which these various insights were held together. By 397, both tasks were for Augustine substantially complete.

Chapter II.

St. Augustine's Mature Teaching on Election and Predestination

In the previous chapter, we traced the development of St. Augustine's understanding of grace from his earliest works to its first mature presentation in De Diversis Quaestionibus ad Simplicianum. In this chapter, our method will be to outline the various facets of Augustine's doctrine of Divine election and predestination, as it is not really possible to discern any development in Augustinian thought on these matters throughout the Pelagian controversy. It could in justice be maintained that the anti-Pelagian treatises are but a gloss on the doctrine expounded in De Diversis Quaestionibus ad Simplicianum, adapted in various ways to meet the Pelagian criticisms.

In Augustinian thought, grace and predestination are indissolubly connected:

> inter gratiam porro et praedestinationem hoc tantum interest, quod praedestinatio est gratiae praeparatio, gratia vero jam ipsa donatio.[1]

Unlike certain modern theologians, Augustine refused just to treat grace existentially without drawing metaphysical conclusions from its workings. In his world-view, the supremacy of Grace combines with his Platonism to produce a deterministic cosmology. No-one can take away the Predestination of God, who created us, sent His Son unto us, and redeemed us before the Creation of the world.[2] In fact, strictly speaking, God cannot be thought of as

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1. De Praedestinatione Sanctorum x. 19. XLIV. c. 974.

2. Enarrationes in Psalmis xxxii. 14. XXXVI. c. 292.

doing anything fresh; when He appears to act suddenly, He is only bringing about what is certain to happen because of its fore-ordination in His eternal counsels.[1] Augustine in fact takes creativity of God with the utmost seriousness; everything depends for its existence solely upon the determination of His will. It is this view of God which is at the heart of Augustine's clash with Julian of Eclanum. The latter's definition of God was as follows:

> Non est autem aliud quam virtus omnia continens, et restituens suum unicuique sine fraude, sine gratia.[2]

Between this regulative idea of the Deity, and the view of God as the creative determiner of all that exists held by Augustine, no compromise was possible. J. B. Mozley's judgment:

> As a philosopher he (St. Augustine) argued wholly upon the Divine attribute of power, or the operation of a first cause, to which he simply referred and subordinated all motion in the universe; and laid down in his dicta on this subject the foundation of Scholastic necessitarianism.[3]

is a fair statement of the basis of the Augustinian metaphysic.

Another facet of his emphasis upon the sole causality of God is his inability, unlike many writers earlier and later, to see any significant difference between foreknowledge and predestination. In fact, predestination is nothing else than God's

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1. Enarrationes in Psalmis cv. 35. XXXVII. c. 1416.
2. Opus Imperfectum I. xxxviii. XLV. c. 1064.
3. The Augustinian Doctrine of Predestination, (3rd ed., London, 1883), p.118.

foreknowledge of those He chooses to deliver:

> An quisquam dicere audebit, Deum non praescisse quibus esset daturus ut crederunt, aut quos daturus esset Filio suo, ut ex eis non perderet quemquam? Quae utique si praescivit, profecto beneficia sua, quibus non dignatur liberare, praescivit. Haec est praedestinatio sanctorum, nihil aliud.[1]

The events of history are absolutely determined, so much so that Augustine speaks of future events being referred to as in the past in the 41st Psalm to show their absolute certainty.[2] Augustine would have had no real quarrel with the view which compares history to the projection of an already made film. The Book of Life, he says, must not be thought of as reminding God of things He might otherwise forget, but rather symbolizes His predestination of those who are to be given eternal life.[3] Nevertheless, it must be admitted that He is not always consistent in this view, and in one of the minor treatises, even suggests that though the end of the world is only put off until the number of the elect is accomplished, yet if this was fulfilled sooner the end would not be delayed.[4] Too much, however, should not be

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1. De Don. Persev. xiv. 35. XLV. c. 1014. The judgment of J. Saint-Martin is especially interesting in this respect: "Lui aussi rattache la prédestination à la prescience jusqu'à les définir l'une par l'autre, jusqu'à se servir indifféremment de l'un ou de l'autre terme, mais son originalité consiste à voir dans la prescience non pas la prévision des mérites, mais la connaissance éternelle des dons que Dieu a décidé d'accorder aux hommes pour faire leur salut." Dictionnaire de theologie catholique, t.xii. c. 2833. Cf. De Don. Persev. xx. 53. XLV. c. 1026.

2. De Civ. Dei xvii. 18 (C.C.) vol. XLVIII. pp.583-9.

3. Ibid. xx. 15 (C.C.) vol. XLVIII. p.726.

4. De Bono Viduitatis xxiii. 28. XL. c. 419-20.

built upon this statement; we have probably only caught St. Augustine in a moment of lapse from theological concentration.

Though Augustine never states that evil is necessary to the perfection of the universe, he is, however, willing to speak of evil increasing the beauty of the world, just as the skilful use of shadow increases that of a picture.[1] God would not have created any man, let alone any angel whose wickedness He foreknew, unless at the same time He equally knew the uses to which He would put that evil on behalf of the good.[2]

The question now arises as to whether Augustine definitely taught a doctrine of double predestination. Phrases such as "predestinated to eternal death" or "punishment" are far too common in his works to allow us to think that he did not do so.[3] At the same time, there is evidence that Augustine was not absolutely throughgoing in his double predestinarianism. For example, he states that though God foreknew that Adam should fall, yet this foreknowledge did not determine his falling.[4] Nevertheless,

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1. De Civ. Dei xi. 23. (C.C.) XLVIII. p.348. Cf. Enchiridion xcvi. 24. XL. c. 244.

2. De Civ. Dei xi. 18. (C.C.) XLVIII. p.337.

3. Ibid. xxi. 24. (C.C.) XLVIII. p.789., and xxii. 24. p.852; Ep. CCIV. 2. (V) 2 (iv.) p.318; De Anima et eius Orgine, IV. xi. 16. XLIV. c. 533; De Perf. Iustitiae Hominis, xiii. 31. XLIV. c. 308; En. in Ps. lx. 24. XXXVI. c. 126; In Io. xliii. 13. XXXV. c. 1711; Enchir. c. 26 XL. c. 245.

4. De Cor. et Grat. xii. 37. XLIV. c. 939.

he also states that Adam did not receive from God the gift of perseverance in goodness, for his own free-will was sufficiently strong to determine whether he should persevere or not.[1] With other men, however, it is very different; they are born in the toils of original sin, and therefore need the certain and determined grace of God to persevere in goodness.[2] The Augustinian position may be expressed as follows: Adam was only pre-determined to freedom, though it was foreknown by God that he would use this freedom badly to turn to evil; men who are born "in Adam" lack, however, their ancestor's freedom and can only be saved by the certainly efficacious grace of God. The eternal destiny of individual human beings is determined by whether God is willing to impart to them this grace or not. If God chooses not to grant this grace to an individual, he remains "in Adam" and is certain not to be saved. It may be argued that this means God does not determine that a man should be damned in the same way as He determines that a man should be saved, as He does not will that man's damnation, but only leaves him as he is. Augustine may well have held this view, but from his choice of language it appears that he did not see any significant difference between this and double predestination. All that may be maintained in regard to this, is that we cannot regard

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1. De Cor. et Grat. xii. 37. XLIV. c. 938-9.

2. Ibid. xii. 35-36. XLIV. c. 937-8.

Augustine as a thoroughgoing supralapsarian; Adam at least was not predestinated to eternal death.

It is interesting to speculate how St. Augustine would have integrated Adam's freedom, foreknown yet not determined as to its result, into his necessitarian world-outlook as described earlier. He realized that freedom in the sense of indeterminacy must exist somewhere in the cosmic process in order that Divine justice might be maintained, but he never really reconciled this belief with his other conviction of God as the all-determining Creator.

Augustine always insists on the justice of the Divine predestination, though this justice is far beyond human understanding.[1] In one of his sermons, he uses a striking phrase concerning this hidden justice of God; he calls it the "deformitas Christi" which, with all its awful mystery, we must in this world rest content, though in the world to come we shall recognize this justice in all its glory.[2] In strict logic, with due regard to the Augustinian pre-suppositions, there can be no injustice with God in saving one person, and leaving another in his sins. As all men through the sin of Adam are a "massa peccati", it is perfectly just that God should save one man and punish another:

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1. Ep. XCV. 6 (V) 2 (1-11) p.511; In Ioannis liii. 6. XXXV. c. 1777.

2. Sermo xxvii. vi. 6. XXXVIII c. 181.

> Bonus in beneficio certorum, justus in supplicio caetorum: et bonus in omnibus, quoniam bonum est, cum debitum redditur; et justus in omnibus, quoniam justum est, cum indebitum sine cuiusquam fraude donatur.[1]

Though the workings of God in choosing one man and rejecting another is utterly beyond the mind of man, yet in all this God is acting with perfect justice.[2] Nevertheless, in spite of this, on occasions Augustine seeks to find reasons for the particular workings of the Divine predestination. He argues that God allows men to persevere for a time and then to fall in order that the truly elect may never grow presumptuous in their salvation[3], while on another occasion he even suggests that some are condemned to show those that are saved the penalty which they owed to God, and from which they had been set free by Grace.[4] Such explanations really warrant a witticism like that of Voltaire's concerning Admiral Byng, that the English occasionally shoot an

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1. De Dono Perseverantiae xii. 28. XLV. c. 1016.

2. "Le dernier mot d'Augustin sur cet obscur problème est un aveu d'ignorance; l'homme s'incline devant un mystère qu'il ne saurait scruter. On notera cependant en quels terms se trouve décrit le pouvoir mysterieux que préside à notre destinée. Ce n'est pas une puissance aveugle ni une volonté arbitraire, c'est une justice et une vérité: neminem damnat nisi aequissima veritate; aequitate occultissima et ab humanis sensibus remotissime judicunt; ces expressions, et d'autres semblables, prouvent que le secret qui nous échappe ne recourre, selon saint Augustin, qu'une parfaite equité." E. Gilson, Introduction a l'etude de Saint Augustin, (Paris, 1931), p.197.

3. De Corr. et Grat. xiii. 40. XLIV. c. 941.

4. Contra Julianum IV. viii. 45. XLIV. c. 761.

admiral to encourage the others; it would have been much preferable if Augustine had remained silent before what he recognized was an awful mystery.

The root problem, however, in the discussion of the Augustinian doctrine of Grace and Predestination is how far it is Christocentric or not. In fact, its "Christianity" depends upon its Christocentricity. If we find that the doctrine is in no way integrally connected to his understanding of the work and place of Jesus Christ, we may very well suspect it as a foreign importation into his theology. Moreover, Dinkler in his exhaustive study of the Augustinian understanding of man has made this very charge - that Augustine's teaching on grace is not substantially related to the place and work of Jesus Christ.[1] Now this judgment is most surprising, especially when we remember Augustine's insistence throughout the De Trinitate upon the unity of operation of the Father and the Son. In this work, he definitely states that which is prepared (paratum) by the Father is also prepared by the Son[2]; while reference to the work of

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1. "Vielmehr is Christus nur indirekt beteiligt. Die Wandlung selbst zu der neuen Haltung gegenüber Gott und der Welt bringt allein die subministratio spiritus sancti, die Gratia Dei, aber sie wirken auf der Erwählten Gottes propter Christum. So gipfelt auch die Enbeziehung Christi in den Gnadenprozess letzlich doch in Gott. Theozentrisch nicht christozentrisch ist Augustins Lehre von der Gnade." Dinkler, Die Anthropologie Augustins, (Stuttgart, 1934), pp.172-3.

2. De Trinitate I. 25.

Christ in predestination is not missing from the specifically anti-Pelagian treatises either, though in these it is generally scarcely anything more than an echo of Eph. 1:4.[1] Whatever may be said concerning the specific office of Christ in predestination, there is not the slightest doubt that grace is always connected by Augustine with His work - even the Old Testament saints were only saved because they lived by Christ's aiding grace.[2]

Argument concerning the unity of Christ and His members in the thought of St. Augustine is now over, after the exhaustive treatment of the subject by Mersch in Le Corps Mystique de Christ.[3] The most important section in regard to the predestinating work of Christ is De Praedestinatione Sanctorum XV. (XLIV. c. 981-2). Christ is here declared to be "praeclarissimum lumen praedestinationis et gratiae" - the great example of predestination. In the first place, His assumed manhood is the great example of gratuitous predestination prior to any possible previous merits: "ille homo, ut a Verbo Patri coaeterno in unitatem personae assumptus Filius Dei unigenitus esset unde hoc meruit?" Secondly, Christ is the great example of the freedom of will created by Grace:

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1. De Corr. et Grat. VII. 13. XLIV. c. 924.

2. De Pecc. Mer. et Rem. I. xi. 13. XLIV. c. 116.

3. Cf. t.2 pp.35-138.

> Numquid metuendum fuit, ne accedente aetate homo ille libero peccaret arbitrio? Aut ideo in illo non libera voluntas erat, ac non tanto magis, quanto magis peccato servire non poterat?

The most intriguing part of the passage, however, comes at the beginning of 31:

> Appareat itaque nobis in nostro capite ipse fons gratiae, unde secundum uniuscuiusque mensuram se per cuncta eius membra diffundit.

Mersch takes the passage as follows:

> En plus, et c'est ceci qui nous intéresse spécialement, elle est une argument a pari, ou, si l'on ose dire, a continuo. Augustin suppose, et il dit explicitement, que la grâce est la vie unique qui anime un organisme unique, qu'elle descend, en cet organisme unique, de la tête qui la possede en plénitude, dans les membres qui en recoivent chacun leur part, et qu'elle demeure en tout son épanchement ce qu'elle était en son origine, parce que tout cet épanchement demeure dans l'unité d'un seul Christ mystique.[1]

Though this interpretation can claim some support from the phrase "in nostro capite ipse fons gratiae", yet it does not directly arise out of St. Augustine's whole argument in the passage. The main point of his argument is that our predestination is an effect of the same free-working grace, as that by which the manhood of Christ was assumed: "Ea gratia fit ab initio fidei suae homo quicumque christianus, qua gratia homo ille ab initio suo factus est Christus", and in the next sentence the Spirit not Christ is referred to as the agent of this grace. In fact,

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1. Le Corps Mystique de Christ t. 2., (3rd ed., Paris, 1951), p.72.

the whole passage sheds no real light on the predestinating work of Christ, but is concerned with the predestination of His manhood - there is, in fact, except for one phrase, no clear indication as to whether the predestination of Christ's manhood is inclusive or individual. Even when we compare this passage with the similar one in De Don. Pers. xxiv. 67, we find only the same argument. Though he ends the passage: "Et illum ergo et nos praedestinavit; quia et in illo ut esset caput nostrum, et in nobis ut eius corpus essemus, non praecessura merita nostra, sed opera sua futura praescivit", he does not inform us that our predestination is included in that of our Head, but rather suggests that it is similar in kind to that of our Lord, stemming from the same gracious purpose.

The Augustinian doctrine of predestination may be said to be Christocentric in so far as the Son equally shared in the act of predestination as the Father, but lacking in Christocentricity in so far as the humanity of Christ does not have a mediate part in the predestination of its members. To make use of the terminology of Schleiermacher, the humanity of Christ in so far as it is related to the predestination of members is "vorbildlich" not "urbildlich". Another example of Augustine's thinking upon this point is to be found in the Tractatus in Ioannis, where after explaining that the glorification of Christ was the predestination of His human nature before the creation of the world, he goes on to say:

> Si enim de nobis dixit Apostolus, Sicut elegit nos in ipso ante mundi constitutionem; cur abhorrere putatur, si tunc Pater caput nostrum glorificavit, quando nos in ipso, ut membra eius essemus, elegit?[1]

Here we see that Augustine's emphasis is upon the simultaneity of our predestination and that of our Lord's humanity, not that our election is in any real way included in that of Christ. Nevertheless, we are loved because we are members of Christ, Whose humanity is in turn beloved because it was assumed by the only-begotten Word. Still our predestination is not directly mediated through the humanity of our Lord, for Augustine goes on to say that in order that we might be beloved as members of Christ, God loved us before we existed.[2] Thus we can see that the root meaning of the phrase "elegit nos in Christo" to Augustine is exemplaristic rather than realistic in its connotation. In this respect, it is worthwhile noting the fact recorded by H. Reuter that Augustine's formula in regard to grace and the work of Christ is most frequently "gratia per Christum", then "gratia propter Christum", and finally most seldom "gratia in Christo".[3] Christ in His earthly ministry is the agent of, rather than the source of predestinating grace, though He is aware that His saving work will only avail for the elect.[4]

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1. Trac. in Ioan. cv. 7. XXXV. c. 1907.
2. Ibid. cx. 5. XXXV. c.
3. Augustinische Studien, (Gotha, 1887), p.52 n.2.
4. Trac. in Ioan. xl. 2. XXXV. c. 1686.

Herein lies one of the basic tensions of Augustinian thought. As we shall see later, a man if he wishes to be saved must belong to the visible Church, i.e. to become a participator in some sense in the consequences of the Christ-event. Yet at the same time, membership of the visible Church does not guarantee salvation. Ultimately, this view finds its root in that, in His historical activity, Christ is but the agent of, but not co-terminous with God's predestinating grace. In his mature works, Augustine still maintains the distinction first made in his Expos. quarumdam prop. ex Epist. ad Romanos between those who are called, and those who are called "secundum propositum". Though God's predestination is certain and sure in its effect, there are those who are baptized and adhere to the Church for a time, and yet do not endure to the end. In some sense, these people must be regarded as elected, yet from the Divine point of view, they cannot be so.[1] No-one in fact, in this life can be sure whether he is of the elect or not - a state of affairs which is necessary to avoid human presumption.[2] Nevertheless, this gift of perseverance, once given, cannot be lost, for those to whom God gives to endure to the end cannot do anything other.[3] What, however, is the status of those who are called into the Church,

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1. De Corr. et Grat. vii. 16. XLIV. c. 925.

2. Ibid. xiii, 40. XLIV. c. 940-1.

3. De Don. Pers. vi. 10. XLV. c. 999.

and yet not given the gift of perseverance? In some way, these belong to Church, yet they cannot be said to belong to the Kingdom of God. Here again, we are forced back to the Augustinian understanding of the work of Christ in predestination. This is perhaps best brought out in a close study of a certain passage in De Trinitate:

> Morte sua quippe uno verissimo sacrificio pro nobis oblato, quidquid culparum erat unde nos principatus et potestates ad luenda supplicia jure detinebat, purgavit, abolevit, exstinxit: et sua resurrectione in novam vitam nos praedestinatos vocavit, vocatos justificavit, justificatos glorificavit.[1]

We notice in this passage that the sequence of Romans 8:30, "predestinated", "called", "justified","glorified" is broken - Christ is said to call, justify and glorify, but not to predestinate. Hence I feel we are not being unjust to Augustine in saying that he regarded "calling" as a part of the work of Christ in His historical activity, yet nevertheless dependent as to its efficacy upon the transcendent and separate act of predestination.

We have seen that in the Augustinian view, the incarnate Christ is primarily the agent of the Divine predestination, which leads us to enquire how far this conception affects his understanding of the universal nature of Christ's work. Augustine categorically states that Christ's death was a ransom for the whole world[2], yet

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1. De Trinitate IV. xiii. 17. XLII. c. 899.

2. Trac. in Ioan. cv. 7. XXXV. c. 1907.

as we have already seen, he believed that even during His earthly ministry Christ was conscious that His work would only avail for the elect. Moreover on occasion, Augustine shows profound uneasiness in dealing with texts which sound a universalistic note. The world in II Cor. 5:19 is interpreted as meaning the Church[1], I Tim. 2:4 that God wishes men of every race and kind to be saved[2], while Romans 5:18 is made to mean that as all who are lost are lost in Adam, so all that are justified are justified in Christ.[3] While it is impossible for us to say that Augustine only believed in a limited atonement, nevertheless it is doubtful whether he really took seriously the more universal aspects of the work of Christ as witnessed to in the Scriptures.

Closely allied to the understanding of the universal nature of the work of Christ is the question of "sufficient grace". Even the Roman Catholic scholar, Karl Rahner, admits that Augustine does not deal adequately with this problem, and that his failure to do so provoked a great deal of the opposition of the Massilians.[4] Man indeed possesses the capacity to have faith as a natural endowment, but that does not mean that he

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1. In Ioan. lxxxvii. 2. XXXV. c. 1853.

2. De Corr. et Grat. xiv. 44. XLIV. c. 943.

3. Pec. Mer. et Rem. I. xv. 19. XLIV. c. 119-20. Cf. De Praed. Sanct. viii. 14. XLIV. c. 971.

4. "Augustin und der Semipelagianismus", Zeitschrift für Katholische Theologie, 1938, p.182.

possesses faith itself:

> Proinde posse habere fidem, sicut posse habere charitatem, naturae est hominum: habere autem fidem, quemadmodum habere charitatem, gratiae est fidelium.[1]

Man also possesses free-will as a natural endowment, but it is not always a good free-will:

> Semper est autem in nobis voluntas libera, sed non semper est bona. Aut enim a justitia libera est, quando servit peccato, et tunc est mala: aut a peccato libera est, quoadno servit justitiae, et tunc est bona.[2]

The will itself is useless unless it possesses the power to be good, which is given alone by God.[3] In fact Augustine recognizes two kinds of liberty which are possible to men:

> Immutabilis autem, cum qua homo creatus est et creatur illa libertas est voluntatis qua beati esse omnes volumus et nolle non possumus. Sed haec ut beatus sit quisque non sufficit, nec ut vivat recte per quod beatus sit; quia non ita est homini congenita libertas immutabilis voluntatis qua velit possitque bene agere, sicut congenita ut qua velit beatus esse; quod omnes volunt, et qui recte agere volunt.[4]

The first type of freedom, the wish to be happy, is common to all men; the second type of freedom, to be able to wish and to do good and so fulfil the desire of the former type of freedom, is possible only to the elect. By the operation of God's grace we begin to will the good, but once this will is in existence it

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1. De Praed. Sanct. v. 10. XLIV. c. 968.

2. De Grat. et Lib. Arb. xv. 31. XLIV. c. 899.

3. Ibid. xv. 31. XLIV. c. 899-900.

4. Op. Impf. VI. xii. XLV. c. 1524.

is maintained by the co-operating grace of God.[1]

Nevertheless, Augustine insists that the very commands of God declare unto us that we possess a free will.[2] The regenerate and justified person who turns to evil from his own will, cannot excuse himself by saying that he has not received grace, because by his own free choice or evil, he has lost the grace which has been given to him.[3] Therefore it appears that to the called yet not elect person a certain freedom is granted to render them responsible. What, however, is the position in regard to responsibility of the person who has not even been called of God? Rahner has suggested that Augustine believed that a man who is not granted grace will not be considered responsible for his individual sins, but will only take his share in the guilt of Adam.[4] In favour of this view is the fact that according to Augustine only Adam had real liberty of choice (in the sense of indeterminacy) between good and evil.[5] Moreover, he is also willing to affirm that even if an individual cannot be rebuked as being responsible for his own personal guilt, yet he should be rebuked for his share in the common depravity inherited from Adam.[6]

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1. De Grat. et Lib. Arb. xvii. 33. XLIV. c. 901.
2. Ibid. ii. 4. XLIV. c. 833-4.
3. De Corr. et Grat. vi. 9. XLIV. c. 921.
4. Op. cit., Zeitschrift für Katholische Theologie, 1938, pp.180-181.
5. De Corr. et Grat. xi. 29. xii. 34. XLIV. c. 933-37.
6. Ibid. vi. 9. XLIV. 920-1.

Nevertheless, against any whole-hearted acceptance of this interpretation stands the fact that though Augustine declares that original sin is sufficient alone for the condemnation of all men, punishment will still be more or less severe in proportion to the sins of individuals.[1]

In fact, Augustine gives no consistent teaching on how individuals can be considered responsible for their own personal sins. He sees, in almost epigrammatic form the problem[2], and yet he gives no clear guidance as to how it may be solved. If men have lost their free-will through the fall of Adam, they cannot be held responsible for any further sins which they might commit. If St. Augustine had examined the problem sufficiently he would have found only two alternatives left to him, if he had to preserve human responsibility for individual wrongdoing: he could have affirmed a residual freedom (in the sense of "posse" as well as "velle") left to man after the Fall - a course which would have led him to a semi-Pelagian position, or he could have affirmed even for unregenerate men a new created freedom in Christ. If Augustine had seen that a choice was necessary between the two, it is probable that he would have chosen the latter - as we have seen earlier, he almost hints as much in regard to those who have been called, but not "secundum propositum". In Augustinian

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1. De Rem. Pecc. et Mer. I. xii. 15. XLIV. c. 117.

2. Ep. 214 2. (V). 2. iv. p.381.

thought, however, the historical work of Christ was orientated rather to the Church than to the Kingdom of God, or to put it in a more strictly Augustinian manner, primarily to the historical manifestation of the Kingdom of God rather than to its hidden activity - because of this he found it hard to conceive of the working of the Incarnate Lord outside of His Church. Again a Christological problem is at the heart of the failure of Augustine to deal with the question of "sufficient grace".

Such in outline is the Augustinian understanding of the questions of election and predestination. Taken as a whole, the pattern is remarkably coherent. Only in regard to the question of "sufficient grace" does one feel that on acceptance of his premises, Augustine has not dealt satisfactorily with the problems before him. At the heart of his teaching, however, we can observe acute Christological problems, especially in the relation between the historical work of Christ and the Kingdom of God. Of these problems Augustine seemed unaware - he never really attempted to inter-relate his doctrine of Grace with his Christology. That in essence is the explanation of the tensions which we have found in the thought of St. Augustine.

Chapter III.

Baptism and Grace in the Teaching of St. Augustine

In the previous chapters we have considered St. Augustine's teaching on election and predestination. We have seen that his orientation in regard to these doctrines has been individual and metaphysical, the work of predestinating grace not being related in any substantial way to the ordinances of the Church. The eternal plan of predestination as it manifests itself in time makes use of the sacraments of the Church, but is in no way tied to them. In no sense can baptism be said to guarantee salvation - a man may be a faithful member of the Church for many years, but if God has not decided to grant him the grace of final perseverance, he will undoubtedly be lost. The visible Church is but the instrument of the Kingdom - but in no way co-terminous with it.

St. Augustine, however, was a bishop of the Church, and therefore, he had to stress the importance of its ordinances in his teaching ministry. He was not a private teacher like Victorinus, who could practically ignore baptism and the eucharist altogether. To the institutional Church, baptism meant much; one could become a Christian in no other way. At the same time, the sacrament was accepted and revered rather than understood; Professor Lampe's book The Seal of the Spirit clearly shows the variety of thought concerning the nature of baptism during the first half-millenium of the Christian era. If any view was predominant in Western Christendom during the time of Augustine, it is probably that which Loofs terms "die vulgäre

Anschauung" of "justificatio ex fide remissione peccatorum per baptismum".[1] Thus Augustine, as long as he paid due respect to this root idea, was perfectly free to develop his teaching on baptism to meet any pressing theological or practical exigencies. In fact, it is primarily from hints dropped in his writings concerning two such controversies: the Donatist and the Pelagian, that we are able to reconstruct the nature and place of baptism in Augustine's understanding of the Divine economy.

In relation to Donatism, Augustine was at pains to uphold the Roman as against the native North African tradition that valid baptism could be given outside the communion of the Catholic Church. Baptism was first and foremost the gift of God, a gift which in no way could be destroyed because it was administered by heretical, schismatical, or unworthy ministers. Against the Pelagians, Augustine was at pains to stress the necessity of the baptism of infants, if they, dying before reaching the years of discretion, were to be saved. If the Pelagians would acknowledge this, they must also logically admit the fact of original sin, which Augustine was primarily urging against them. In relation to these two controversies, the specifically Augustinian understanding of the nature of baptism was formulated.

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1. Leitfaden, pp. 386-88.

First of all, St. Augustine taught that by baptism the individual was incorporated into the Church. Concerning this effect of baptism, even Mersch shows disappointment in recognizing that it does not play a very important part in the thought of Augustine.[1] Nevertheless, this aspect is expressly mentioned even in the anti-Pelagian writings, where we should expect its absence to be most noticeable:

> non solum in regnum Dei non baptizatos parvulos intrare non posse, sed nec vitam aeternam posse habere praeter Christi corpus, cui ut incorporentur, sacramento Baptismatis imbuuntur.[2]

In fact, he uses the belief that infants are incorporated into the body of Christ before they are able to imitate anyone to rebut the Pelagian idea that participation both in Adam and in Christ really means nothing more than imitation.[3] The question, however, arises - what in this instance does Augustine mean by the Church.

In one sense, as Augustine uses the word, the body of Christ is nothing other than the number of those predestinated to eternal life.[4] In that Church, the "hortus conclusus et fons

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1. "Dans la suite de la controverse, Augustin insistera moins sur cet effet positif du baptême, que ses adversaires pélagiens ne nient plus, que sur l'aspect négatif, la déliverance du péché originel, qui fait le centre de la discussion." Le Corps Mystique de Christ, t. 2. p.69 n.1.

2. De Pec. Mer. et Rem. III. iv. 8. XLIV. c. 190.

3. Ibid. I. ix. 10. XLIV. c. 114.

4. C. Faustum Manichaeum xix. 10.

signatus" there are found not only those who live according to the Spirit, but those weaker Christians who still have to strive against the desires of the flesh, and even those still in heresy and paganism who yet in the foreknowledge of God will eventually be saved.[1] This Church extends beyond, and yet does not completely contain the empirical church.[2] Augustine refuses to declare: "quod ubicumque et quomodocumque baptizati gratiam baptismi consequuntur, si gratia Baptismi in ipsa salute intelligitur, quae per celebrationem Sacramenti confertur", for it is clear that many within the Church are not saved by it.[3] No clear meaning, therefore, can be attached to the declaration of Augustine that baptism incorporates an individual into the Church. In one sense of the word, baptism can incorporate an individual into the body of the elect, as in the case of an infant who is baptized shortly before its death - but we must not forget that in the Augustinian view of the matter it is due to the predestination of God that the infant is baptized. On the other hand, many who have been baptized, even within the Catholic Church, will certainly not be saved because they do not belong to the number of the elect.

A more profitable line to follow in order to gain an insight

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1. De Bapt. c. Donat. V. xxvii. XLIII. c. 195-6.

2. Ibid. VI. i. i. XLIII. c. 197; IV. iii. 4. c.155-6; Trac. in Ioannis XLV. 12. XXXV. c. 1725.

3. De Bapt. c. Donat. IV. xiv. 21. XLIII. c. 167.

into the Augustinian understanding of baptism is to trace the analogy he draws between circumcision and baptism. Augustine states directly that both circumcision and baptism prefigure the same thing - circumcision of the heart and the cleansing of the conscience, and that just as circumcision was abolished by the first coming of Christ, so shall baptism by His second, because then the realities represented by these sacraments will be eternally abiding.[1] Both sacraments exist for the cleansing from original sin, which is represented in the old rite, by the removal of the "praeputio".[2] So certain is Augustine of this interpretation that he argues against Julian that the fact Isaac had to be circumcised on the eighth day proves that he must have been under the sway of original sin, though born of such holy parents as Abraham and Sarah.[3] Though it must be admitted that Augustine is mainly concerned with comparing circumcision and baptism in their similar functions of removing original sin, yet his close study of the Old Testament must also have taught him the significance of circumcision as the individual's incorporation into Israel, the people of God. Circumcision did not guarantee salvation - many Israelites fell away from the covenant, but circumcision did signify to them the fact that

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1. Ep. xxiii. 4. (V. Augustine II. 1-2) pp.67ff.
2. Op. Impf. II. 73. XLV. c. 1173.
3. C. Julianum III. xviii. 34. XLIV. c. 720.

they belonged to the covenant nation.

A similar view of baptism seems to have been held by Augustine, especially when we bear in mind, another simile he used in regard to it - that of the soldier's mark, which though a man may turn deserter, still marks him for life as belonging to the army.[1] Thus, Augustine teaches that baptism incorporates an individual into the Church, in the sense that he receives an indelible characteristic as belonging to the army of God. Baptism seals his consecration to God[2], making him a member of the people of God, but in no way ensuring his salvation, or declaring him to be an heir of the Kingdom of God.

Baptism not only makes the initiate a member of the new Israel, it also, when entered into sincerely, wipes out the entail of the past. In fact Augustine can sum up the work of baptism in relation to sin alone: "quia nihil est aliud in morte Christi baptizari, nisi peccato mori".[3] It is only to the baptized that God forgives sins.[4] At the same time, sins are not necessarily forgiven in baptism "ex opere operato". Augustine discusses whether there is any forgiveness of sins for

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1. De Bapt. c. Donat. I. iv. 5. XLIII. c. 112; c. Ep. Parm. II. xiii. 29. c. 71-72. (XLIII).

2. Ep. XCVIII. 5. (V) 2(i-ii) p.526.

3. C. Julianum VI. iv. 10. XLIV. c. 828.

4. De Symbolo viii. 16. XL. c. 633.

the person who receives baptism outside of the unity of the Catholic Church. He will not say that sins cannot be forgiven outside the Church though he queries how forgiveness is possible where there is no charity; at the same time, he declares that though a man's sins may be remitted by the great power of so holy a sacrament, yet immediately they return back upon him when he ceases to live in the unity of love with the Catholic Church.[1] Neither is there any remission of sins for the individual who is insincere in his baptism, though if such a person should turn in penitence to the Church, his sins would be forgiven him.

Further light upon Augustine's emphasis that remission of sins in baptism can only be given in the unity of the Catholic Church is provided by Sermo LXXI where it is declared that the sin against the Holy Spirit is to depart from the unity of the Catholic Church, the realm of the Holy Spirit, where alone is the forgiveness of sins.

We need to ask, however, what Augustine means by the forgiveness of sins; is it freedom from sin's guilt, or power, or both? Baptismal remission of sins concerns primarily the guilt rather than the power of sin. Augustine can speak of concupiscence being forgiven "in reatu" yet remaining "in actu"[2]

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1. See discussion De Bapt. c. Donat. I. xii. 18-20. XLIII. c. 119-20.
2. C. Julianum Pelagianum II. iii. 5. XLIV. c. 676.

while even when infants are delivered from sin by baptism, it is primarily from the guilt of Adam. The infant is considered being involved in that guilt, because when Adam's sin was committed he was one with the perpetrator.[1] Remission of sins to Augustine is primarily a matter of imputation: "hoc est enim, non habere peccatum, reum non esse peccati"[2]; he ends the paragraph by reminding his readers that sin may remain "in actu" though its guilt may be taken away. We can see, therefore, that though all past sins are taken away as to their guilt in baptism, yet their power still remains to be overcome.

Closely allied with the question as to what is the nature of the remission of sins given in baptism, is the connection between that forgiveness and one's future sins. Augustine speaks of venial sins being cleansed by almsgiving[3], referring to that kind of life which can only be helped upon the heavenly way by the bountiful donation of alms[4], and even on occasion mentions our "meriting" God's pardon.[5] In the Enchiridion this thought is developed further; for the light sins which we unavoidably commit every day our prayers are sufficient for

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1. Ep. XCVIII. 1. (V) 2(i-ii) pp.520-521.
2. De Nup. et Concup. I. xxvi. 29. XLIV. c. 430.
3. De Perf. Iust. Hom. ix. 20. XLIV. c. 302.
4. De Civ. Dei. xxi. 27. (C.C.) XLVIII. p.800.
5. De Fide et Operibus xxii. 41. XL. c. 223.

forgiveness, for more serious sins almsgiving is important, especially the forgiveness of other people's sins against ourselves, for it shows greater love to forgive one who has injured you than to assist a person who has not done one any harm.[1] Nevertheless, even the forgiveness of these post-baptismal sins are related by Augustine to the baptismal gift:

> Sic, inquam, hoc accipiendum est, ut eodem lavacro regenerationis et verbo santificationis omnia prorsus mala hominum regeneratorum mundentur atque sanentur; non solum peccata quae omnia nunc remittuntur in Baptismo, sed etiam quae posterius humana ignorantia vel infirmitate contrahuntur: non ut Baptisma quoties peccatur; toties repetatur; sed quia ipso quod semel datur, fit ut non solum antea, verum etiam postea quorumlibet peccatorum venia fidelibus impetretur. Quid enim prodesset vel ante Baptismum poenitentia, nisi Baptismus sequeretur; vel postea, nisi praecederet?[2]

Thus, in a very real sense, baptism confers forgiveness not only for the guilt of past sins, but for those in the future as well; any "satisfactio" we may make such as almsgiving only becomes efficacious for forgiveness by virtue of our baptism.

We may sum up St. Augustine's teaching in relation to baptismal forgiveness as follows. Baptism, though the sacrament may be validly received outside the Catholic Church, conveys no "opus operatum" forgiveness. It does not grant forgiveness to the person who receives the sacrament in schism, nor to the person who receives it in insincerity within the Catholic Church,

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1. Enchiridion 19. lxx - lxxiv. XL. 265ff.

2. De Nup. et Concup. I. xxxiii. 38. XLIV. c. 435.

though forgiveness will follow in virtue of that sacrament once either person is fully reconciled with the Church in charity. Baptismal forgiveness only avails within the unity of the Catholic Church, the realm of the Holy Spirit. The forgiveness conferred in Baptism is that of guilt, which avails not only for original sin and sins of the past, but also for future sins, though for these last, a certain "satisfactio" is required either by prayer or by almsgiving.

Closely allied to the forgiveness of sins in baptism is the emphasis of Augustine on the deliverance by baptism from the power of the Devil.[1] It appears that unregenerate mankind, besides its solidarity in Adam, also belongs to the kingdom of Satan from which it was delivered by baptism. Augustine in his teaching on baptism makes little positive use of this idea, but rather uses the antiquity of the practice of the exsufflacation of infants to rebut Pelagian charges that he is introducing into the Church a new-fangled Manichaean idea. We may suspect that the motif was a piece of "Gemeindetheologie" which Augustine accepted but could not assimilate in any positive way into his own thinking.

Earlier, we have seen that sins are only forgiven in baptism within the unity of the Church - forgiveness belonging essentially

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1. Op. Impf. II. clxxi. 1220 (XLV) and III. cxcix. c. 1333; C. Julianum VI. v. 11. XLIV. c. 829; De Nup. et Concup. II. xxix. 50. XLIV. c. 465.

to the realm of the Holy Spirit. At the same time this unity of the Holy Spirit is not necessarily bound by the borders of the visible Catholic Church; he can speak of some who by some untoward event seem to be driven forth from the Church, but are really more approved than if they had remained within, because they are firmly founded on the rock of Christian charity.[1] The unity of the Holy Spirit in the last resort is a matter of inward charity rather than external conformity. This is clearly brought out in St. Augustine's teaching on excommunication where he declares that one who wrongfully excommunicates a person will suffer more than the person he has excommunicated. The reason for this is that it is by the Holy Spirit dwelling in holy persons that anyone is loosed or bound, and the Holy Spirit inflicts unmerited punishment on no-one.[2]

It is by baptism that an individual becomes a temple of the Holy Spirit[3], though Augustine is emphatic that this does not mean that every member of the Church possesses miraculous gifts.[4] Moreover, this gift of the Holy Spirit is not just confined to baptized adults, it is also secretly infused into the hearts of infants.[5] There is some slight wavering in the thought of

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1. De Bapt. c. Donat. I. xvii. 26. XLIII. c. 123-4.
2. Fragment appended to Ep. CCL. (V) 2 iv. pp.598-9.
3. De Symbolo v. 13. XL. c. 633.
4. Trac. in Ioan. xxxii. 7. c. 1645.
5. De Pec. Mer. et Rem. I. ix. 10. XLIV. c. 115.

St. Augustine as to whether it is possible to receive Baptism without receiving the Holy Spirit in some measure. He suggests that in baptism men can put on Christ in two ways: firstly in so far as they receive the sacrament itself, and secondly so as to receive holiness of life. All "put on Christ" in the first sense, but in the second sense it only belongs to the pious. It is the same with the Spirit; Augustine here instances the case of Saul, who received the Spirit to destruction. At the same time, he will not be dogmatic on the point, and definitely leaves open the possibility of having baptism without receiving the Spirit.[1] Moreover, on occasion, Augustine can definitely declare that though sacraments may be common to all members of the Church, grace definitely is not.[2] Furthermore, Augustine also insists that the Holy Spirit can be given outside of baptism. He instances the case of Cornelius, who received the Holy Spirit not only before the imposition of hands, but also before the baptismal act itself.[3]

Augustine's teaching on the relationship of the Holy Spirit to baptism may be summarized as follows. The Holy Spirit is given in baptism to the sincere believer and to the infant, who thereby becomes a participator in the unity of charity which is

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1. See whole section De Bapt. c. Donat. V. xxiv. 34. XLIII. c. 193-194.

2. En. in Ps. lxxvii. 2. XXXVI. c. 980f.

3. Sermo cclxvi. 7. XXXVIII. c. 1228.

the bond of the Catholic Church. At the same time, the gift of the Spirit is not absolutely tied to the ordinance, and as a matter of fact the unity of the Spirit is primarily a matter of heart, rather than of a relationship to an external organisation:

> Certe manifestum est, id quod dicitur, in Ecclesia intus et foris, in corde, non in corpore cogitandum; quandoquidem omnes qui corde sunt intus, in arcae unitate per eamdem aquam salvi fiunt, per quam omnes qui corde sunt foris, sive etiam corpore foris sint, sive non sint, tanquam unitatis adversarii moriuntur.[1]

Moreover, the full working of the Holy Spirit in an individual's life is not guaranteed by baptism - there is such a thing as the partial gift of the Spirit. The sacrament even Simon Magus could have, the operation is found even within wicked men such as Saul, but only the good can possess through the Spirit the gift of charity.[2]

Though we have seen that the unity of love without which baptism cannot become fully efficacious is a matter of heart rather than external relationship, Augustine insists equally upon the necessity of baptism as well as conversion of heart in order that salvation might be achieved:

> Quibus rebus omnibus ostenditur aliud esse sacramentum Baptismi, aliud conversionem cordis; sed salutem hominis ex utroque compleri.[3]

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1. De Bapt. c. Donat. V. xxviii. 39. XLIII. c. 197.

2. Ibid. III. xvi. 21. XLIII. c. 149; cf. Sermo 71 xviii. 30 - xix. 32. XXXVIII. c. 461ff.

3. De Bapt. c. Donat. IV. xxv. 32. XLIII. c. 176.

Though both are necessary for salvation, it appears that really conversion is the more necessary, for Augustine admits the possibility of a converted man who is unable to be baptized, being saved.[1] On the other hand, Baptism per se is never regarded as sufficient for salvation - justification is necessary as well:

> Quisquam igitur cupit poenas evadere sempiternas, non solum baptizetur, verum etiam justificetur in Christo, ac sic vere transeat a diabolo ad Christum.[2]

The root meaning of justification to Augustine is "ex impio fieri justum"[3], which primarily reveals itself in the healing of our will so that we may obey the Law.[4] It is not just the remission of sins, but the giving of charity so that we turn away from evil and do good through the Holy Spirit.[5] The process of justification in fact consists of three parts: first of all the bath of regeneration where our sins are remitted, then the war against our sins from whose guilt we have been already absolved, and finally our continual prayer, by which we pray "forgive us our debts".[6] We see then that in the Augustinian scheme justification is a far wider term than baptism, including in fact the whole

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1. De Bapt. c. Donat. IV. xxv. 32. XLIII. c. 176.
2. De Civ. Dei. xxi. 16. (C.C.) XLVIII. p.782-3.
3. De Spiritu et Littera xxvi. 45. XLIV. c. 228.
4. Ibid. ix. 15. XLIV. c. 209.
5. Op. Impf. II. clxv. XLV. c. 1212.
6. C. Julianum II. viii. 23. XLIV. c. 689.

Christian progress in sanctification; Baptism is but its inception when we are delivered from the guilt of our sins.

Two other terms "regeneratio" and "renovatio" are used by St. Augustine in close relation to baptism. Baptism in fact is definitely termed the sacrament of regeneration.[1] Renovation is the process started by baptism which ends at the state of blessedness after the resurrection of the dead when the body shall partake fully of the process of perfection which has already begun in the spirit.[2] Renovation consists of two parts: the remission of sins conferred in baptism, and the healing of the disease of sin which exists throughout the whole of human life on earth.[3] The "regeneratio" given in baptism does not, moreover, possess the quality of once-for-allness, for as Scheel has pointed out, Augustine can on occasion speak of a "novissima regeneratio".[4]

Following Scheel, Dinkler has made the charge against Augustine that in his scheme Christian existence lived towards God is independent in the last resort of the sacrament of baptism.[5] All

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1. De Pecc. Mer. et Rem. I. xviii. 23. XLIV. c. 122.

2. Ibid. II. vii. 9. XLIV. c. 156.

3. De Trinitate XIV. xvii. 23. XLII. c. 1054.

4. C. Jul. Pelag. II. viii. 30. XLIV. c. 694; cf. O. Scheel, "Zu Augustins Anschauung von der Erlösung durch Christus", Theologische Studien und Kritiken, 1904, pp. 530ff.

5. "Die Taufe erlässt den reatus der Erbsunde aber die zutiefst religiose hinwendung zum Guten, die erst das neue Leben ad Deum realisiert, bleibt noch einer besonderen Gnade vorbehalten, die vom Sakrament unabhängig ist." Die Anthropologie Augustins, p. 171.

the evidence which we have examined convinces us that the charge must stand; we have seen that Baptism in so far as it confers remission of sins to the sincere believer, grants freedom from guilt rather than from the power of sin. At the same time, it has also been shown that the pardon for guilt granted in baptism avails for future as well as for past sins. In the struggle against evil within, no doubt, the believer can rejoice that pardon for the almost inevitable failings of daily life has been granted to him in his Baptism. Only to this extent can baptismal grace be said to affect the life lived "ad Deum". This judgment is reinforced by the fact that in no clear way does Augustine connect the gift of the sanctifying grace of the Spirit with baptism. Even to the sincere believer, the prime grace of baptism consists in the forgiveness of guilt.

Before, however, we can fully assess Augustine's baptismal teaching, several other factors have to be taken into consideration. In the first place, we must seek to understand the emphases which Augustine put on various parts of the baptismal rite. In the first place, Augustine brings baptism into close relationship with the word. A man cannot see the Kingdom of God until unto the sacrament of baptism is added righteousness, but "forma Sacramenti datur per Baptismum, forma justitiae per Evangelium".[1] Moreover, the Word is all-important in the baptismal rite - if it is taken

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1. C. Litteras Petiliani III. lvi. 68. XLIII. c. 385.

away the water is nothing more than water, but if it is added the water itself becomes a kind of visible word. Nevertheless, the power of the Word does not lie so much in its utterance, but in the belief of the person baptized.[1] In regard to infants who are brought to baptism, the Word is made effective through the faith of those who present the child for baptism. It appears here that Augustine is only repeating in a different form his contention that the sacrament of baptism is not effective for salvation unless it is received in faith. At the same time, he insists that the water used in Baptism, consecrated by the words of the Gospel, becomes holy in spite of the personal unworthiness of those who administer it.[2] Nevertheless, though the prayers uttered at Baptism may be faulty, the intent to administer the sacrament ensures its validity, though without "certa illa evangelica verba" it is not possible to administer Baptism.[3]

Augustine says very little concerning the other rites related to Baptism. In one of his sermons, Augustine speaks of the congregation becoming as bread which can be offered to God. Through the water of Baptism they are made into a dough, and then brought to the shape of a loaf, but they still need to be baked. This is done by the Chrism: "Hoc est chrisma. Oleum etenim

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1. Tractatus in Ioannis lxxx. 3. XXXV. c. 1840.

2. De Bapt. c. Donat. III. x. 15. XLIII. c. 144.

3. Ibid. VI. xxv. 47. XLIII. c. 213-4.

ignis nostri".[1] In another passage, he refers to Chrism as "quidem in genere visibilium signaculorum sacrosanctum est, sicut ipse Baptismus", and tends to connect its function with the strengthening of the Church as a priestly body, though at the same time he declares that this sign can exist even among worthless individuals.[2] He is even less specific over the precise nature of the laying on of hands, though on occasion his language seems to make reference to the popular belief that it was especially connected with the gift of the Holy Spirit.[3] At the same time, the laying-on of hands unlike Baptism is repeatable, and Augustine can say of it, almost disparagingly: "Quid est enim aliud nisi oratio super hominem?"[4] It can be seen that Augustine has no wide-spread or carefully thought-out sacramental theology. Chrism and laying-on of hands were not the matter of controversy, and therefore Augustine found it unnecessary to adumbrate any theory concerning them. Otherwise it appears that Augustine was quite willing to accept popular notions concerning the function of these "sacraments", and he never sought to integrate them into the central motifs of his theological outlook.

Is there any real connection in the thought of Augustine

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1. Sermo ccxxvii. XXXVIII. c. 1100.
2. C. Litteras Petiliani II. civ. 239. XLIII. c. 341-3.
3. Sermo cclxvi. 7. XXXVIII. c. 1228.
4. De Bapt. c. Donat. III. xvi. 21. XLIII. c. 149.

between Baptism and faith? Baptism to him is the sacrament of faith, though it does not become effective towards salvation unless it is implemented by love. Loofs has drawn attention to the distinction which Augustine makes between "credere Deo" and "credere in Deum" - the former being a mere intellectual assent, the latter the faith which worketh by love.[1] It is by faith in the latter sense that Baptism is made effective. At the same time, Augustine is equally insistent that even an inadequate or corrupt faith in the sense of "credere Deo" does not invalidate the sacrament; concerning faith he can declare: "interest quidem plurimum ad salutis viam, sed ad sacramenti quaestionem nihil interest."[2] In Ep. XCVIII Augustine has an interesting discussion of the place of faith in the Baptism of infants. He is insistent that the faith and will of the parents has nothing to do with the "regeneration" of the child in Baptism; it is through the will of the Spirit that the child is born again, and in bringing their child for Baptism, the parents are really instruments of the Spirit.[3] Later, however, in the same letter Augustine states that it is not really the parents who present their child for Baptism, but they are in effect the agents of the whole society of saints and believers.[4] Because he has received the sacrament

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1. Leitfaden, pp.391-2.
2. De Bapt. c. Donat. III. xiv. 19. XLIII. c. 146.
3. Ep. XCVIII. 2. (V. Augustinus II 1-2) pp.521ff.
4. Ibid. XCVIII. 5. (V. Augustinus II 1-2) p.526.

of faith, the infant may be termed a believer, for when he comes to years of discretion he will not repeat the sacrament, but understand its meaning. In the meanwhile, during his childhood the sacrament will protect him against evil powers, and ensure his salvation if he should prematurely die.[1] Baptism, in the Augustinian view, does not confer faith, but is only made effective by faith. The only exception to this is the case of infants, but here again there is no inconsistency with the basic Augustinian position. Faith is only created within the adult by the Holy Spirit, and it is also through the Holy Spirit that a child is brought to Baptism. By the working of the Holy Spirit a child whom it is foreknown will meet with a premature death is brought to Baptism and hence saved; by the working of the Holy Spirit the baptized adult is given the graces of faith which worketh by love and of final perseverence. In the last resort the sacrament is just a bare sign, through which the Spirit chooses to work; only through the not necessarily attendant work of the Holy Spirit does Baptism become the gateway to salvation.

How necessary then is Baptism to salvation? The usual answer of Augustine is that it is absolutely necessary; just as if one is to enter into the temporal inheritance of a human father, one must be born of an earthly mother, so if one is to inherit the Kingdom of God, one must be born into the Church.[2]

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1. Ep. XCVIII. 10. (V. Augustinus II. 1-2) p.532.

2. Tract. in Ioan. xii. 5. XXXV. c. 1486.

Cornelius' righteousness would not have sufficed to gain him the Kingdom of Heaven unless he had been baptized by Peter.[1] Augustine's main point, however, in this section of De Baptismate is to point out the danger of disdaining the sacrament of Baptism. Christ Himself underwent Baptism in order to rebuke the pride of any who thought that they were sufficiently righteous not to receive it.[2] At the same time Augustine is of the opinion that not only martyrdom will take the place of Baptism if unperformed, but also faith and conversion of heart if it is impossible to perform Baptism in time.[3] It is not unfair to sum up therefore the teaching of Augustine in De Baptismate concerning the necessity of baptism for salvation in the words of John Owen: "not the want, but the contempt of this sacrament, is damnable". This treatise, however, was written at the turn of the century, and later during the exigencies of the Pelagian controversy, one can detect in Augustine a hardening of attitude. In De Baptismate he refers to the faith of the dying thief, making up for the lack of the sacrament of Baptism[4], but later he is manifestly uneasy concerning this incident in the Gospels. He suggests that possibly the death of the thief could be regarded as an example

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1. De Bapt. c. Donat. IV. xxi. 28. XLIII. c. 173.
2. Ibid. IV. xxii. 29. XLIII. c. 174.
3. Ibid. IV. xxii. 29. XLIII. c. 173.
4. Ibid.

of "blood-baptism"; if the thief had shown love to our dying Saviour, how likely it is that he would have been willing to die for Him when He was alive. Moreover, it is not impossible, he suggests, that the thief was sprinkled by the water which flowed from our Saviour's side.[1] Later on in the same treatise, he puts forward the alternative suggestion, that it was possible that the thief had already been baptized before he had fallen into evil ways.[2] We must not be surprised at this hardening; Augustine was becoming the victim of his argumentation. First of all he had argued from the practice of infant baptism that original sin needed to be forgiven to infants before they could enter the Kingdom of God, in turn this had led him to stress Baptism as the only way by which the guilt of original sin could be taken away, so making Baptism absolutely essential for salvation. This, rather than an enhanced view of the nature of baptismal grace, led to the stiffening of Augustine's attitude.

How are we to assess the baptismal doctrine of St. Augustine? In the first place, we must notice its very close interconnection with other aspects of the Christian life. Augustine rarely speaks about Baptism in itself - it is always Baptism and the remission of sins, Baptism and the gift of the Holy Spirit, Baptism and renovation. Because of this, it is impossible to

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1. De Anima et eius origine. I. ix. 11. XLIV. c. 480.

2. Ibid. III. ix. 12. XLIV. c. 517.

charge Augustine with holding a "magical" view of the sacrament - except perhaps in relation to infants, who by the nature of the case can give no response to it. Baptism to Augustine only becomes meaningful when it is set into the context of the Christian life as a whole.

This strength of the Augustinian understanding, however, is intimately connected with its great weakness. In his ironical approach to the Donatists, in his insistence that Baptism can be validly given outside the Catholic Church, Augustine so reduced the content of Baptism that it became scarcely more than a bare sign. Heretical baptism was completely valid, yet at the same time completely inefficacious. All that could be said of it was that it gave an indelible stamp which characterized a person as a soldier of God's army - from which, however, for the rest of his life he may continue to desert. Augustine could never unreservedly use the Pauline language: ὅσοι γὰρ εἰς Χριστὸν ἐβαπτίσθητε Χριστὸν ἐνεδύσασθε Whatever Baptism meant to St. Augustine, it did not guarantee entrance into the fullness of grace of Christ. Before a man could receive Baptism effectively he needed the grace of conversion of heart, and afterwards in order that he might be eventually saved he needed the grace of perseverance. At the door of St. Augustine, more perhaps than anywhere else, must be laid the charge of disintegrating Grace into graces. Moreover the nature of the Grace given in Baptism <u>per se</u> is of a particularly indefinite character. Baptism appears to be a bare mark, which

it is absolutely necessary to receive before one can be saved. It is from this arbitrary element in Augustinian thought that the Medieval Nominalists can claim him as their forerunner.

It is noteworthy that there is no clash between the Augustinian doctrine of predestination and his understanding of Baptism. Baptism is only the instrument of God's predestinating grace; it cannot become effective unless it is externally supported by the grace of God, converting the person's heart, and enabling him to amend his life. Grace is the prerogative of the Kingdom; Baptism is the sacrament of the Church. The heart of the matter lies in Augustine's eschatology - his Platonically conceived notion of the eternal plan of God being "other" to the temporal world, prevents him from doing any real justice to the notion of "inaugurated" eschatology. Professor G. W. H. Lampe has commented "that some of the most striking eschatological teaching of the early Fathers is to be found in homilies whose context is sacramental, and particularly in those whose setting is the rite of initiation".[1] This eschatological note is absent to a very large extent from the teaching of St. Augustine on Baptism.

It is impossible to quarrel with St. Augustine' view of the Church existing in the interim between the laver and the kingdom;[2]

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1. "Early Patristic Eschatology" in Eschatology (Edinburgh, 1953), p.22.

2. De Gestis Pelagii. xii. 28. XLIV. c. 336.

but the question which faces us continually in his theology is how far the kingdom is present in the life of the Church. Our next step is to consider the earlier teaching of the Church on election, baptism, and the Kingdom of God, in order that we may be granted some insight into the origins of the problems raised by the Augustinian theology.

Chapter IV.

Predestination and Election in the Western Fathers Till the Time of St. Augustine

The ideas of election and predestination are one of the foundation-motifs of the theology of the New Testament. Not that this most mysterious part of the economy of Christian truth is constantly being referred to in the New Testament, but rather that the references to the doctrine presuppose it as belonging to the generally accepted pattern of belief. Finding its source both in the classical Old Testament understanding of the immediate creative activity of the Living God and in the apocalyptic pre-supposition of God's supreme determination even over the powers of this present evil age, it was from first to last one of the most deeply rooted preconceptions of the Apostolic writers.[1] It is highly probable that the reason why this doctrine does not have a more prominent position assigned to it in the New Testament is due to the fact that it was never a source of controversy.

The ideas of election and predestination are found in the Gospels; whatever may have been the original Aramaic underlying the saying recorded in Mk. 4:12, there is little doubt of the meaning of St. Mark: Jesus deliberately cast His teaching into parabolic form to prevent those who were not spiritually prepared from responding to it. Moreover, Jesus states categorically that only few will be saved[2], and further declares that many are called

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1. For a fuller discussion of the importance of this pre-supposition in the background of the N.T. writers' thought, see E. Stauffer, New Testament Theology (E.T.), pp.51ff.

2. Mt. 7:13f.; Lk. 13:23f.

but few are chosen.[1] Furthermore, there is nothing in the teaching of Jesus which implicitly contradicts this attitude.[2] It is the same with the Book of Acts, perhaps the most missionary-minded writing within the New Testament. The whole key to the book's attitude in this matter is given in Peter's sermon in chapter 2, which many scholars believe is based upon a very early source:

> For to you is the promise, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call unto Him.[3]

No-one disputes the presence of this doctrine in the thought of St. Paul, and he is often regarded as the chief protagonist of this doctrine in the New Testament.[4] Chapters 9 - 11 of the Epistle to the Romans are the Biblical "locus classicus" for all discussions in Christian theology concerning the doctrine of

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1. Mt. 22:14.

2. See for a discussion of this aspect of the teaching of Jesus, K. Stendahl, "The Called and the Chosen" in Root of the Vine, Essays in Biblical Theology by A. Friedrichsen and others, (London, 1953).

3. Acts 2:39; cf. also Acts 9:15; 13:48.

4. For a good account of the Pauline doctrine of Predestination see F. Davidson, Pauline Predestination, (London, 1946). The defect in Davidson's treatment of this matter lies in the fact that he does not take into account Paul's understanding of himself as an "apostle" within the "Heilsgeschichte" which has been stressed in recent years by such writers as J. Munck, Paulus und die Heilsgeschichte, (Copenhagen, 1954).

predestination. Yet discussion of this passage has often been vitiated, when what Paul has written has been expounded in terms of individual salvation and damnation. It must be remembered that here Paul writes first and foremost as an Apostle, and he is concerned primarily with the description of the workings of the Divine initiative within "Heilsgeschichte". He is discussing the destiny of God's people, Israel, not the eternal fate of individuals. If we are to understand the Pauline arguments in these chapters in the light of contemporary Rabbinic exegesis, even the figures of Ishmael, Esau and pharaoh must be taken as types of the opposition to God and His people rather than as individuals.[1] In fact, Paul scarcely touches upon the question of individual predestination at all; certainly those who have been called and justified, have also been predestinated by God[2], but Paul nowhere works out the relationship between the individual and Church in regard to election and predestination. Rather all who have been baptized, have put on Christ, and are therefore Abraham's seed and heirs of the promises of God.[3] On the other

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1. See J. Munck, Christus und Israel - eine Auslegung von Rom. 9-11, (Copenhagen, 1956), pp. 40f. It is interesting to note his judgment on the potter image in Romans 9: "es darf nicht auf des Schöpfers Gestaltung der einzelnen Menschen bezogen werden. Das Bild wird in politischen und heilsgeschichtlichen Zusammenhängen benutzt, wo Gott mit den Heidenvolken und dem auserwählten Volk handelt." (p. 48).

2. Romans 8:29f.

3. Gal. 3:27ff.

hand Paul fully realizes the danger that members of the Church might fall away and be lost[1], though he always recognizes the eschatological possibility that these might be saved also.[2] Election to Paul is primarily a corporate matter, concerning the Church as the "eschatological congregation" chosen by God in the last times to proclaim the Gospel in the short interim before the End. It is a calling to a specific task which implies both service and salvation, and yet which does not exclude a wider possibility of salvation at the End.[3] This same corporate understanding of election is to be found also in I Peter[4], and the Apocalypse[5]; individuals are addressed or referred to as "elect" because they belong to the Church.

It is, however, in the Fourth Gospel that we find the sternest predestinarian teaching in the New Testament. In this book the whole of mankind is divided into two groups - those who love light, and those who love darkness.[6] The latter could not even believe after the signs of Jesus, for their eyes had been blinded.[7] Jesus categorically states that no man is able to come

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1. Romans 11:21f.; I Cor. 9:27; I Cor. 10:1-11.
2. I. Cor. 5:5.
3. Romans 11:32.
4. I Peter 1:1f. and 2:9.
5. Rev. 17:14.
6. Jn. 3:19ff.
7. Jn. 12:39ff.

to Him unless he is drawn by the Father[1], but that all whom the Father had given Him should come to Him.[2] The different attitude towards predestination found in the Johannine writer as compared with that found in the other New Testament epistles lies rather in the dissimilitude of that writer's outlook than in any opposition to the earlier point of view. The Johannine writer sees history as conflated with the End and therefore already pregnant with the decisions to be revealed at the Last Judgment; Paul, however, obeys his own injunction to judge nothing before the Day[3], and, therefore, can only understand God's predestination directly in relation to the eschatological community, and not to the individuals of which that community is composed. It is because of this that Paul can allow the possibility that some in the community may fall away and be lost, and yet also affirm the seemingly contradictory possibility of a wider salvation at the Last Day. The difference in attitude is perhaps most strikingly seen in I Jn. 2:19 where the heretics are declared to have left the Church, so as to reveal openly that they had never truly belonged to that body. Paul does not speak in such a strain because the chief emphasis in his message is upon the task of the Church between the resurrection and the

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1. Jn. 6:44.

2. Jn. 6:37.

3. I Cor. 4:5.

parousia, while the Johannine writer sees the κρίσις as inaugurated in the historic mission of Jesus. Paul views the End from the position of the eschatological community "in Christ" between the ages; the Johannine writer views history from the point of view of the End which already entered time in Jesus Christ.

Both St. Paul and the writer of the Fourth Gospel bring the act of election into the closest possible relation with Jesus Christ. According to the former, we are chosen by the Father in Christ before the foundation of the world[1], and this is quite in line with the whole of Pauline theology. If Christ is the seed of Abraham to Whom all the promises belong, we only share in them as we share in His election. In the Fourth Gospel also the work of election belongs to the Father as well as to the Son[2], and such sayings which refer to the donation of the elect to the Son by the Father must be interpreted along the lines of the subordination-within-equality pattern found within that Gospel in regard to the relationship between the Father and the Son.[3] Election in both writers is thoroughly Christocentric,

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1. Eph. 1:4.

2. Jn.13:18; 15:15, 19.

3. For a discussion of this point see K. Barth, Church Dogmatics, (E.T.), II/2, p.106, noting especially his conclusion: "the electing of the disciples ascribed to Jesus must be understood not merely as a function undertaken by Him in an instrumental and representative capacity, but rather as an act of divine sovereignty in which there is seen in a particular way the primal and basic decision of God which is also that of Jesus Christ."

but in St. Paul the electing subject is Jesus Christ considered as the Seed of Abraham in Whom all the promises are Yea and Amen, while in St. John He is considered as the Judgment of God which has entered into history facing men with an inescapable decision.

We have seen therefore that in the New Testament there are two main strands of teaching concerning election; the former is corporate and concerns primarily the Divine initiative within Heilsgeschichte, the latter concerns the Divine pre-ordination which realizes itself as each individual decides for or against Christ within history. These two strands are not brought into any real contact with each other within the New Testament. Our next task is to see how far these motifs were taken up by the Fathers of the Early Church, and woven into the theology of the first four centuries.

In turning to the Apostolic Fathers we find that the election motif is here very much less in evidence than in the New Testament. In Ignatius, probably the most considerable theologian amongst them, we find the idea used in two main senses. In the first place, it is used concerning the Church; he addresses the Church at Ephesus as τῇ προωρισμένῃ πρὸ αἰώνων[1], while the Church of the Trallians also is referred to as ἐκλεκτῇ καὶ ἀξιοθέῳ .[2]

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1. "Greeting to Ephesians" in Apostolic Fathers, ed. J.B. Lightfoot, p.105.

2. "Greeting to Trallians", p.116.

Election, therefore, in so far as it possesses any concrete meaning, is primarily corporate rather than individual. When the adjective ἐκλεκτός is used of any individual in these letters as of a certain Rhaius Agathopus[1], it appears to be no more pregnant of the doctrine of election than the phrase a "choice spirit" does amongst ourselves. Another form of this idea of a pre-ordained Church occurs in II Clement. In a rather confused passage, the writer speaks of the Church existing from the beginning as spiritual, and that this spiritual Church was manifested in the flesh of Christ and that if any τηρήσῃ αὐτὴν ἐν τῇ σαρκὶ καὶ μὴ φθείρῃ ἀπολήψεται αὐτὴν ἐν τῷ πνεύματι τῷ ἁγίῳ - the upshot of argument appearing to be that it is necessary to keep the flesh pure, if one is to receive the Spirit.[2] This same idea of the pre-existent Church is also to be found in "Hermas", where the Church is pictured as an old woman because she was created before all things and before the world was formed.[3] We may safely say therefore that the evidence points to the idea of a pre-existent, and hence pre-ordained, Church being widely held in the Church during the first half of the second century.

It is, however, in I Clement that we find the most definite teaching on election in the post-Apostolic age. In the

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1. Philadelphians xi. p.126.

2. II Clement xiv. p.50.

3. Vision 2. 4. p.302.

introduction to his letter, the doctrine immediately appears when he censures their strife as being foreign to the elect of God.[1] He goes on to remind them of the early days of the Church when they struggled that τὸν ἀριθμὸν τῶν ἐκλεκτῶν might be saved.[2] In fact, the idea of the elect has a definite place in his thinking. He quotes what appears to be an inverted conflation of Mt.18:6, 7; 26:24, but for ἕνα τῶν μικρῶν τούτων τῶν πιστευόντων εἰς ἐμέ the phrase ἢ ἕνα τῶν ἐκλεκτῶν is used instead.[3] There is no reason for thinking that this quotation represents the original text of the Gospel, but this quotation does at least point to one of two things. If Clement is quoting from memory, it shows that for him "believer" and "elect" were at least roughly synonymous terms, while if on the other hand, he is referring to a collection of the sayings of Jesus, he is at least pointing to an exegetical tradition which made a similar identification.

Does Clement, however, understand election primarily in the corporate heilsgeschichtlich Pauline sense, or is he really referring to the Divine act predetermining an individual to find his salvation in Christ? There is, it must be admitted, a certain amount of evidence in favour of the latter alternative. Clement

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1. I Clement i. 1. p.5.

2. Ibid. ii. 4. p.6.

3. Ibid. xlvi. 8. p.30.

speaks of the person who with unvacillating humility and piety performs the ordinances of God certainly ἐντεταγμένος καὶ ἐλλόγιμος ἔσται εἰς τὸν ἀριθμὸν τῶν σωζομένων διὰ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ.[1] Certainly in the previous paragraph, he commends humility as a necessity for being enrolled by God[2], while he also declares that he will make prayer that God may preserve intact the number of his elect.[3] It appears that in Clement a third shade of meaning has become attached to the term ἐκλεκτός , which refers now not so much to the Church considered as the elect community or race, but rather to the individual Church-member. The term seems to be used in a very similar manner in "Hermas", where it appears to be synonymous with the members of the Church regarded as individuals.[4]

Especially interesting, however, in the thought of Clement is the connection of our election and call with Jesus Christ. He puts to his readers as a rhetorical question "have we not μία κλῆσις ἐν Χριστῷ ?[5] Moreover, in the penultimate blessing, he speaks of God Who chose the Lord Jesus Christ καὶ ἡμᾶς δι' αὐτοῦ εἰς λαὸν περιούσιον [6], a thought which is echoed in the final

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1. I Clement lviii. 2. p.36.
2. I Clement lvii. 2. p.35.
3. I Clement lix. 2. p.36.
4. Vision II. i. 3. p.300; Vision IV. ii. 5. p.315; Vision II. ii. 5. p.301.
5. I. Clement xlvi. 6. p.30.
6. I. Clement lxiv. 1. p.39.

benediction also.[1] In this respect, it may be said that the teaching of Clement on election is in line with that of Ephesians.

Our study of the teaching of the Apostolic Fathers on election and predestination seems to lead to the following conclusions. In the first place, the idea of a pre-existent Church is common to three of them, Ignatius, II Clement and Hermas, which suggests that the idea had a certain theological value at the time. It is easy to see how such a view of the Church could develop out of the teaching of Ephesians and Colossians, though it is possible also to suspect Gnostic influence (Ekklesia is the name of one of Valentianian aeons). At the same time, it is possible to argue that the Gnostic Ekklesia aeons grew out of the primitive teaching concerning a pre-existent Church. Nevertheless, "ἐκλεκτός " begins to lose its pregnant New Testament meaning, and becomes more or less synonymous with the church member. However, the use of this term, even in a depotentiated sense, bears witness that the idea of election in regard to the Church, was once a vital factor in Christian thought.

If the Apostolic Fathers can be said to witness to a decline of interest in the election-motif in the theology of the Church, the latter part of the second century reveals to us its almost

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1. I Clement lxv. 2. p.40.

complete disappearance. In all fairness, it must be realized that the principal writers whose works have come down to us from the middle of the century were the Apologists - and the doctrine of election is rarely the mainspring of a defence of the Christian faith. The emphasis in the Apologists is upon man's freedom and responsibility. Though a great deal is made of the argument from prophecy, Justin in particular is careful to state that though the Word of God foretells that certain angels and men will inevitably be punished, nevertheless, this is not due to any fore-ordination on the part of God.[1] It is probably due to the Apologists more than anyone else that the distinction between foreknowledge and foreordination (a distinction unknown to the Hebrew mind) was introduced into Christian theology.

The writings of Irenaeus breathe a very different atmosphere from those of the Apologists, being primarily of the nature of polemic directed against the heretic, than of apology to woo the pagan. In this writer, the term "predestination" comes back into circulation, though his usage rarely approaches the classical meaning given to the term by Augustine. In the first place, the idea of predestination is used in regard to God's work of creation. God predestinates all things, forms them as He pleases, gives harmony to all things and assigns them their place.[2] Almost

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1. Dial. cxli. M.P.G. VI. 797ff.

2. Adv. Haer. II. ii. M.P.G. VII. c. 714.

as a corollary of this, the idea of predestination is applied to the Divine plan of salvation. God determined all things beforehand for the building up of the economy of his dispensations in order to bring man to perfection[1]; our Lord did everything in the order and time which was foreknown by God[2], while the Spirit descended under the προωρισμένην οἰκονομιαν.[3] At times, he seems to approach the classical meaning of the elect, when he can say that when the predetermined number is completed those who are enrolled for life shall rise again.[4] This idea is never really developed in Irenaeus, and seems to lack a definite place in the thought of the bishop. Moreover, Irenaeus states a fully libertarian doctrine of the will. Man is a cause to himself whether he becomes wheat or chaff[5]; not only in works but also in faith God has preserved the will of man as free and under his own control[6], whilst in regard to the judgment of men:

> et qui operantur quidem illud, gloriam et honorem percipient, quoniam operati sunt bonum, cum possint non operari illud; hi autem qui illud non operantur, judicium justum excipient Dei,[7] quoniam non sunt operati bonum, cum possint operari illud.

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1. Adv. Haer. IV. xxxvii. M.P.G. VII. c. 1104.
2. Ibid. III. xvi. M.P.G. VII. c. 926.
3. Ibid. III. xvii. M.P.G. VII. c. 931.
4. Ibid. II. xxxiii. M.P.G. VII. c. 834.
5. Ibid. IV. iv. M.P.G. VII. c. 983.
6. Ibid. IV. xxxvii. M.P.G. VII. c. 1102.
7. Ibid. IV. xxxvii. M.P.G. VII. c. 1100.

It can be seen that Irenaeus' use of the idea of predestination is primarily in relation to creation and the Divine ordering of the Heilesgeschichte - and is never brought into direct relation to the salvation of individuals. In Tertullian, the idea of predestination has disappeared almost entirely, except for a very occasional use of the word elect.

We have seen how in the second century the Pauline heilsgeschichtlich strand in New Testament teaching on election came to the fore to the total exclusion of the Johannine understanding of the matter. In a certain fashion the former strand was further developed, and we meet for the first time the idea of a pre-existent Church. On the other hand, the singular tended to become a synonym for the ordinary, faithful Church-member, and did not seem to imply any idea of individual predetermination. In the Apologists, the idea of election ceases to belong to content of the Faith itself, but instead is one of the questions dealt with in a kind of philosophical prologomena to theological discussion. It just becomes a matter of divine foreknowledge, having no vital effect upon the work of salvation. The dominant strand in Irenaeus' understanding of election is his stress upon the Divine heilsgeschichtlich but we also find a certain admixture of views concerning foreknowledge which had been propounded by the Apologists.

There are several reasons for the neglect of the Johannine strand in the New Testament teaching on election and predestination

during the second century. In the first place, there was the constant menace of Gnosticism against which the Church had to contend during these years. Some form of determinism was one of the common presuppositions of Gnosticism; men were divided by nature into σαρκικοι , ψυχικοι and πνευματικοι . Johannine teaching concerning the radical distinction between those who love darkness and those that do the truth could easily be interpreted in such a manner. We must remember that in point of fact the Fourth Gospel was the favourite canonical work with the Gnostics. Against this, it was necessary to hold to the view of the Catholic Church as the common society of salvation. If the Church was to remain Christian in any way more than name, its ruling authority had to be historical tradition, not the more or less ephemeral insights of the "spiritual". Hierarchy in the Catholic Church was primarily related to historical event - succession going back to the Apostles or Apostolic men, not to spiritual gift or insight. On this ground, any idea of individual predestinarianism was suspect as being destructive of the idea of the Catholic Church.

Secondly, we must take into account the predominance of what Anders Nygren calls the "nomos" motif in second century Christianity. The Church in the post-apostolic age was in deadly earnest concerning the moral life; the argument concerning the moral superiority of Christians was stock-in-trade to all the Apologists. It is a well-known fact that historically

predestinarianism and antinomianism often walk together hand in hand, as in fact they did in some of the more extreme Gnostic sects. It is little incentive to the man who has had perhaps not a very deep conversion experience to be told that his salvation depends entirely upon the predestinating will of God, which all his efforts cannot alter in the slightest. The morality of predestinarianism is an ethic of Grace, a very different thing from the morality of rewards and punishments.

Perhaps, however, the chief reason for the lessening stress on Divine election during the second century is the diminishing eschatological expectancy. Predestination and eschatology are really inseparable. Election is but "inaugurated" eschatology - the recognition that the final Divine purposes are at work in the present. Predestination and election are the terms in which the eschatological community expresses its sense of the overlap of the times. The eschatological community is not over-concerned about commending itself to the world, or protecting its members against heresy, for it believes itself to be living on the eve of Judgment-day - but just those two very activities were the principal concerns of the second century Church. It can in fact be said that predestinarianism only becomes existentially intelligible within the eschatological community. But by the second century, the eschatological tension for the Christian Church had to a large extent slackened - it had ceased to regard itself as the eschatological community, and instead had become the

Catholic Church. Hence the whole idea of election and predestination became to it almost unintelligible.

After Tertullian the themes of election and predestination almost entirely disappear from Western theology for the next hundred and fifty years. During that time, the Western Church was preoccupied with controversies on Church order and the Trinity, not upon the nature of Grace. At the same time, there is a gradual deepening in the understanding of the roots of the Christian life when compared with the strenuous legalism of Tertullian. It is difficult to plot the course of this development in any distinct manner, but it is clearly evident when one studies the writings of Ambrose.

That writer states uncompromisingly that a Christian can take no real credit for the fact that he is a Christian:

> qui Christum sequitur, potest, interrogatus, cur esse voluerit Christianus, respondere 'visum est mihi'. Quod cum dicit, non negat Deo visum, a deo enim praeparatur voluntas hominum.[1]

There is also his saying about God calling those whom He deigns to call, and making religious whom He will, which was so often quoted by Augustine during the course of the Pelagian controversy.[2] At the same time, Ambrose lays a firm stress upon human responsibility - Christ often comes to the door and knocks, but

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1. Expos. in Luc. I. x. P.L. XV. c. 1538.

2. Ibid. VII. xxvii. XV. c. 1794.

if He is not allowed to enter, it is our fault not His.[1] Accordingly, Ambrose holds back from any doctrine of absolute predestination - God wishes all to be His, and it is a man's fault if he is not so.[2] In line with this view he declares the death of Christ to be for the absolution of the whole human race.[3] Yet the idea of predestination does play a part in his thought; he can say that both the Church and the saints were fore-ordained before the world began.[4] At the same time, predestination to Ambrose is predestination according to foreseen merit:

> non enim ante praedestinavit, quam praesciret, sed quorum merita praescivit, eorum praemia praedestinavit.[5]

In some of his more philosophical moments, Ambrose seems to go even further than this. Homes-Dudden sums up one passage as follows: "God has knowledge by nature and His knowledge is eternally complete and incapable of increase; while man knows only the past and the present, God knows also the future, because the future is simply what He has determined in His mind and willed to be."[6] It can be seen that there is very little difference

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1. Expos. Ps. 118. xii. 13. XV. c. 1436.
2. In Ps. 39. enarr. 20. XIV. c. 1116.
3. In Ps. 39. enarr. 6. XIV. c. 1111.
4. De Fide Christiana III. x. 64. XVI. c. 627.
5. Ibid. V. vi. 83. XVI. p.665.
6. St. Ambrose, (Oxford, 1935), v. 2. p.564; cf. De Fide. V. xvi. 198. XVI. c. 717/8.

between the position of Ambrose and that of the early Augustine outlined in the first chapter. The maturer understanding of the Church in relation to Grace was gradually forcing it to confront afresh the question of election.

Almost contemporaneous with Ambrose was the writer Victorinus, a converted Platonist, controversialist against the Arians and Biblical commentator. A private teacher, he tended not to set very much store by the institutional side of Christianity. To quote Monceaux:

> Victorin ne tient aucun compte du culte; il ne parle ni des prêtres ni des cérémonies. Le seul sacrement qu'il mentionne est le baptême; et encore le baptême étant administré par des hommes, il y voit une forme inférieure de la transmission de la grâce. Pour lui l'Église est simplement l'ensemble des individus qui croient; le lieu de priere n'est pas un lieu de sanctification et de culte, mais l'école de la vérité.[1]

It is, however, as a commentator on the Pauline epistles that he is of most interest to us; with him there is a return to sober literal exegesis, an attempt is made to let the Bible speak for itself. To quote Monceaux again:

> Ce qui le caractérise surtout, c'est le sens historique: il insiste sur les circonstances qui ont motivé les Epîtres de saint Paul, et il relève avec soin tous les faits concrets. Il n'invoque guère le tradition ecclésiastique, pour interpreter un passage obscur ou justifier un precepte. Il compte uniquement sur la raison et sur la science; il traite les textes sacrés comme les textes profanes, et compara librement les diverses interprétations proposées.[2]

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1. Histoire litteraire de l'Afrique chretienne t. 3., (Paris, 1905), p.415.

2. Ibid. t. 3. p.405.

Such commenting on the Pauline epistles forced Victorinus to do justice to the New Testament teaching upon grace. From this Victorinus does not shrink; we gain our reward not because of our merits but because of the grace of God.[1] No-one can come to God unless called by God through Jesus Christ[2], this insistance that our calling is through Jesus Christ is one of the chief points made by Victorinus. The emphasis upon the work of Christ in our election and predestination is due to the connection which Victorinus makes between his Christology and his understanding of Grace. Christ is the Logos, which Victorimus interprets as the will of God in action:

> Intelligamus igitur, et saepe diximus, Deum esse ipsam potentiam, magnitudinem, substantiam plenitudinis totius; Christum vero, id est λόγον eum, qui in Christo Dei voluntatem.[3]
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> voluntas enim Dei, Christus est; quia ea facit quae Deus vult.[4]

It is really because of his Platonism that Victorinus does justice to the Biblical statement that our calling is in Christ. It is impossible to say how far the thought of Victorinus influenced that of Augustine; Loofs definitely believes that Augustine had not met with Victorinus' commentaries, at least during his early

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1. Ad Philippenses III. 15. 16. P.L. VIII. c. 1222.
2. Ibid. III. 13. 14. P.L. VIII. c. 1222.
3. Ad Ephesios I. i. VIII. c. 1236.
4. Ibid. I. i. VIII. c. 1235.

years as a Christian.[1] Nevertheless, we can see being gradually assembled the various elements out of which the Augustinian view on election and predestination was composed. Combine the deeper insight into the workings of Grace in Western theology as shown by the writings of Ambrose, the Platonism and the honest facing of the Pauline message by Victorinus, and there is the mixture out of which the mature thought of Augustine was composed. In this respect, Augustine just brings to a head the normal development of Western theology.

One element, however, present in the primitive pattern is absent from the thought of Augustine - the eschatological tension. It was psychological insight which deepened the Western Church's understanding of grace, not the sudden revelation of the mighty saving acts of God, which had inaugurated the last days, as for the primitive church. Election was no longer "inaugurated" eschatology, but the outworking of Platonic determinism. The same words and symbols may be used, but the underlying metaphysic had imperceptibly changed.

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1. Leitfaden, p.351 n.1.

Chapter V.

The Development in the Understanding of Baptism from New Testament Times till St. Augustine in the Western Church

In such space as is enforced upon me by the nature of this work, it is impossible to give a thorough description of this development - which would need to be a study in itself. Detailed analysis of the various Western fathers on this question of doctrine is impossible, so all that can be done is to select certain salient points in their teaching which the writer believes are particularly significant for the development of this doctrine. Moreover, in this chapter my dependence upon other writers in this field will be particularly apparent, especially Flemington[1], Benoît[2] and Lampe.[3] At the same time, though depending to a large extent upon the material they have assembled, and often accepting their interpretation of that material, the responsibility for the selection from their works is entirely my own.

We must start our enquiry by asking what were the prime "motifs" in the New Testament understanding of Baptism. The understanding of Baptism there expressed is primarily conditioned by two factors intimately related to each other: the eschatological expectancy and ethos of the early Church, and final significance also attached by the early Church to the Christ-event. The connection between the two factors may be put briefly as thus -

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1. The New Testament Doctrine of Baptism, (London, 1948).
2. Le baptême chrétien au 2ème siècle, (Paris, 1953).
3. The Seal of the Spirit, (London, 1951).

Testament period (excepting the Pastorals and II Peter), the Church was possessed with this eschatological expectancy - it is for example equally present with Paul in Philippians as in Thessalonians.[1] Though it deepened its self-understanding in several ways, the New Testament Church never bypassed the primary fact concerning its existence - that it was the "eschatological congregation".

Entry into the "eschatological congregation" was by means of Baptism. The appropriateness of this rite can be seen, when we remember that it was through Baptism that a proselyte was ritually purified before he could be counted as an Israelite in the fullest sense of the word. John, by instituting the "baptism of repentance" implied that even Israelites by birth need to be purified before they could really be reckoned as members of the true Israel of God. By baptism one became a true Israelite - this for the earliest Church was the root meaning of the ceremony, though infinitely deepened by their understanding of all that was implied by the baptism of Christ.

By baptism, the convert became a participator in the Holy Spirit, which had been poured forth on the "eschatological congregation". The Spirit, however, is not conceived of so much as a gift to the individual, as that the individual becomes

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1. Phil. 4:5. (The fact that the nature of the parousia takes up greater space in Thess. is besides the point - probably because the Philippians had been better instructed in the faith, they never raised the question.)

that the eschatological expectation of the early Church was centred upon Christ, while the significance of Christ was conceived eschatologically.

Dealing with the eschatological factor first, it would be generally agreed that the Early Church first of all (in point of time) thought of itself as the "eschatological Congregation" קְהַל יהוה - a term which in later Judaism had become charged with eschatological significance.[1] The Church regarded itself as the group of the elect set aside for salvation in face of the imminent "parousia" and the consummation of the age. If the early chapters of Acts are to be accepted as a reliable historical record, it would appear that this sense of the imminence of the "parousia" prevented the earliest Christians from engaging in missionary activity in the usually accepted meaning of the word - their proclaiming of the κήρυγμα was primarily an act of witness, rather than an attempt to gain adherents. From Peter's speech in Acts 2, it even appears that the main significance of the gift of the Spirit was as a sign of the nearness of the end.[2] Circumstances, and the deeper understanding of its mission forced upon the Church by these circumstances, really compelled it into its world-mission. Nevertheless, throughout the whole ew

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1. Cf. R. Bultmann, "Theology of the New Testament", (E.T.), Vol.1, pp.38f.

2. Acts 2:16ff.

a partaker in the corporate gift of the Spirit. In this sense, all baptized Christians possess the Spirit, i.e. in so far as they now belong to the realm of the Spirit. Nevertheless, there are varying gifts of the Spirit, some higher than others, though the Spirit is common to all.[1] The question arises, however, whether the Early Church thought of the Holy Spirit as being given in baptism, or by some other closely attached rite as the laying-on of hands. How, in particular, are we to interpret the evidence of Acts as to the reception of the Holy Spirit in Christian initiation? As Dr. Silva New has written: "Belief in Jesus (or in His Name), baptism, the remission of sins, the laying on of Apostolic hands, and the reception of the Spirit seem to have formed a single complex of associated ideas, any one of which might in any single narrative be either omitted or emphasized".[2] The evidence in Acts is far too confusing to fit into any scheme which associates the gift of the Spirit with the laying-on of apostolic hands as exemplified in Tertullian's De Baptismo and Hippolytus' Apostolic Tradition. Lampe has argued that the significance of the laying-on of hands when related to that of the narrative framework of Acts is that of "a sign of association in the apostolic or missionary task of the Church".[3] It is the

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1. I. Cor. 12:4-13.

2. The Acts of the Apostles, ed. Jackson and Lake, Vol.V., p.134, quoted Flemington, op. cit., p.38.

3. op. cit., p.76. Cf. pp.64-81 for Lampe's exposition of this view.

sign of unity with the Church in its missionary task, together with the gift of the power to perform it. It appears to the present writer that we have either to accept some view like this, or adopt the counsel of despair of believing that Acts really depicts a period of doctrinal confusion and diversity, when the Holy Spirit was conceived of primarily in terms of charismatic phenomena. Lampe's suggestion does enable us to see some unity behind Luke's understanding of the part played by the laying-on of hands. If we accept his view, the evidence of Acts falls in line with the rest of the New Testament that the individual is made a partaker of the Holy Spirit through baptism.

In entering the "eschatological congregation" through baptism, the individual also received the gift of the remission of sins - likewise, a part of the Christian understanding of baptism from the earliest days.[1] Again this gift of the remission of sins must be viewed in relation to the fundamental idea of the "eschatological congregation". The root idea behind the remission was that of the imputation of righteousness. It was not just that the past entail of guilt was erased, and the individual placed into a state of sanctification which he must maintain - but rather that he now received the status of belonging to the true Israel of God. Repentance was not just a pre-baptismal renunciation of evil, but the common ethos of life in the

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1. Acts 2:38.

"eschatological congregation" turning away from this present age in expectancy of the return of the Son of God from heaven. Remission of sins is not primarily the forgiveness of past guilt, but the endowment of a new status as being holy and sanctified in the sight of God. It is because of this that St. Paul appeals to Christians to manifest in their lives what they are really through their baptism.[1] At the same time, from the earliest days rose the question as to whether one could lose this baptismal status. Even St. Paul does not seem to have made up his mind upon this question. In the same epistle, he can warn the Corinthians that they may perish just as did those Israelites who were baptized into Moses and yet fell afterwards into idolatry[2], while he can commend that a notorious sinner should be handed over to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, so that his spirit might be saved in the day of Jesus Christ.[3] Probably the generally-accepted solution to this question in the Early Church was that enunciated by the writer to the Hebrews, who regards apostasy as the ultimate sin for the Christian.[4] This solution would fit in well with the Church's understanding of itself as the "eschatological congregation" - the one sin which could not

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1. Romans 6:1-12.

2. I. Cor. 10:1-12.

3. I. Cor. 5:5.

4. Heb. 6:6.

be remitted was to renounce one's membership of that body.

At the same time, the Christian Church was not just founded on the hope of a futuristically-conceived eschatology. John the Baptizer could have founded (and perhaps did) such an "eschatological congregation". The Church believed that the End had proleptically arrived in Jesus Christ, and that in a very real sense the End was inaugurated in its own very existence. Because of that, the Church not only lived "to" Christ but "from" Christ. Its faith was not just orientated towards a future coming, but existed from a hidden fulfilment in the past to the cosmic manifestation of that fulfilment in the future - a fulfilment which was working itself out in its own present life.

The prime fact about New Testament baptism is that it is baptism into Christ. All the other baptismal "gifts" are grounded in this prime fact. In the Synoptics the Baptism of Christ is intimately connected with His mission. At His baptism in Jordan the Divine voice declares Him to be at the same time both the Messiah and the Suffering Servant[1], while Jesus Himself refers to His mission as His βάπτισμα .[2] In particular, He associates His Baptism with His death.[3] Thus when St. Paul declares that we are baptized into Christ's death[4], he is just

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1. Mk. 1:11 and parallels cf. Ps. 2:7, Is. 42:1.

2. Lk. 12:50.

3. Mk. 10:38-9.

4. Romans 6:3.

bringing into the full flower of expression what had originally been planted in the Church's mind by its Founder. By our own baptism, we are made partakers in Christ's atoning death, and participators of His Baptism, the inaugural symbol of His saving mission. This recognition that baptism primarily implies identification with Christ's saving work, gives us real insight into two interesting questions concerning the practice of the Early Church. In the first place, it helps us to give some answer to the query as to whether we can believe that the Twelve were ever baptized. They may very well not have been, but that did not invalidate their Christian status in the eyes of the Early Church, as by personal contact they had been in a very real sense participators in our Lord's βάπτισμα . Secondly, this belief that baptism is really participation in Christ's saving work lies behind the generally accepted view that a martyred catechumen received his baptism in his death. In his martyrdom, the catechumen is identified with Christ's saving βάπτισμα on the Cross.[1] The depth of our participation in Christ by baptism is shown by how St. Paul brings the sacrament into close relationship with our becoming sons of God[2], a thought which if we are to follow Flemington's exegesis is also suggested by St. John.[3]

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1. Lampe, op. cit., p.57 n.4.

2. Gal. 3:26,7.

3. John 3:3-5. Cf. Flemington, op. cit., pp.86f.

Christ in His Baptism identified Himself with Israel in its need for purification. He, in Himself the New Israel, entered the Old in order to re-create it afresh. Thus, He entered into the role of Suffering Servant, receiving the Messianic anointing of the Spirit, which was to be to the New Israel as the Law was to the Old, the Divine representative in its midst. By baptism, therefore, the Christian is incorporated into the fullness of Christ's redeeming activity. This is the fundamental fact about New Testament baptism - the higher the Christology of the New Testament the more important baptism becomes. An example of this is to be found in the Epistle to the Colossians, where it appears (according to the very probable interpretation of W. L. Knox) that the semi-Gnostic teachers had disparaged baptism as just being a lustration for past sins, while other ordinances had to be undergone if any further advance in the spiritual life was to be made. Against this type of argument, Paul asserts the complete victory of Christ, into whom they have been baptized, over all spiritual powers. Therefore, these other rites are useless, for the fullness of Christ's total victory has been given to Christians already in baptism.[1]

Thus we can see that Baptism in the New Testament sense is first and foremost incorporation into the fullness of Christ's saving work. All the gifts associated with Baptism are but

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1. St. Paul and the Church of the Gentiles, (Cambridge, 1939), pp.149-50.

facets of this one prime fact. For example, the forgiveness of sins in baptism ultimately depends upon our incorporation into Christ's atoning death. Baptism is the proleptic application of that sanctification which Christ has achieved for the New Israel upon the Cross.[1] Because of this, the sanctification (ἡγιάσθητε) of the very imperfect Corinthian Christians can be assigned to the time of their baptism.[2] By baptism, we are reckoned as partakers in Christ's sacrificial righteousness of obedience - it is for this reason that the Church of Scotland's interim report can rightly term baptism "the sacrament of substitution".[3]

The gift of the Spirit is also intrinsically connected with baptism into Christ. Just as Christ at His Baptism entering into His eschatological mission as Suffering Servant-Messiah received the anointing of the Holy Spirit, so the Church is sealed with the same Spirit (ἀρραβὼν τῆς κληρονομίας) in the interim period of its own eschatological mission before the Parousia. The eschatological gift of the Spirit is really the Church's participation in Christ's own Messianic anointing.

Even faith, which often in the New Testament is connected with baptism in a very close manner, is also grounded upon the

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1. Eph. 5:26f.

2. I. Cor. 6:11.

3. Interim Report of the Special Commission on Baptism, 1955, pp. 50-51.

prior work of Christ. James Denney's often quoted phrase: "baptism and faith are but the outside and inside of the same thing"[1] does not mean that participation in the divine work of salvation conferred by baptism is conditioned by the human response of faith. The root idea behind New Testament πίστις is the divine אֱמוּנָה "stability" "faithfulness" as manifested in Jesus Christ.[2] Saving faith is primarily participation in the faithfulness of God revealed in the saving mission of Jesus Christ. The efficacy of baptism is not grounded upon the prior belief of the individual but upon the faithfulness of God in Jesus Christ.

We have seen that New Testament Baptism could be rightly termed the sacrament of inaugurated eschatology. By it, one was incorporated into the eschatological act of salvation which had occurred in the mission of Jesus Christ. At the same time, the ἔσχατον was not yet manifest, but the Spirit is given as the ἀρραβών of the Christian's new status. Though the Christian had been made a partaker of Christ's sanctification of the New Israel, it is still possible for him to fall into sin. Repentance is not just a pre-baptismal act, it is the constant attitude of the Christian in the "eschatological congregation".

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1. The Death of Christ, (London, 1902), p.185.

2. See for careful argumentation of this point, A. G. Hebert, "'Faithfulness' and 'Faith'", Theology, Vol.LVIII, pp.373-9.

There is very little difference between it and the Pauline exhortation to Christians μεταμορφοῦσθε τῇ ἀνακαινώσει τοῦ νοός.[1] In such an ethos of eschatological fulfilment and expectancy combined together, it would be possible to understand how baptism incorporated the individual into the fullness of Christ's redeeming work, while as yet all the members of the Church were more or less imperfect. The question arises, however, would such a unity of understanding be possible when the eschatological tension of fulfilment and expectancy began to disappear.

We have seen that the unity of New Testament Baptism lies in the fact that it incorporated the individual into the fullness of Christ's eschatological act of salvation. The question may be raised as to whether this is the New Testament unity of doctrine or only that of St. Paul. Though St. Paul may have set the stamp of his own understanding on the interpretation of the doctrine, yet the use by him of the fact that Baptism incorporates into the death of Christ, shows that this premise was common both to him and to the people to whom he was writing.[2] Thus it is just to postulate such a unity in the apostolic understanding of the nature of baptism. When we try to test the writings of the second century by this standard, however, we run into several difficulties. In the first place, these

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1. Romans 12:2.

2. Romans 6:1-4; I. Cor. 1:13.

writings are mainly occasional, with the exception of the more systematic defences of the Apologists. There is scarcely anything approaching a systematic treatise on the faith until Irenaeus' Epideixis - in itself a very slight work. Moreover, there is no specific treatment of baptism until Tertullian's De Baptismo. Because of these facts, it is very hard to dogmatize concerning what the second century Church believed about the nature of baptism. We cannot, for example, maintain that because certain aspects of the unified New Testament understanding of baptism are absent in a certain writer, that he was ignorant of, or opposed to, these views. The argumentum e silentio can prove everything or nothing. Neither must the assumption be made that every writer was minutely logical in his understanding of the faith. Many Christians, even of high intellectual calibre, are not now; why should we think that they were in the second century? Therefore, we are very restricted in attempting to argue from the logical implications of an expressed belief. The very material precludes us from giving a general outline of the development of the understanding of Baptism. All that is possible is to draw attention to emphases varying from those of the New Testament - emphases which may not be conclusive in themselves, but cumulatively may prove so. In this discussion reference will be made to writers, e.g. Ignatius, whom it could be argued were representatives of the Eastern rather than the Western Church. Against this, there must be taken into

account the cosmopolitan nature of second century theology[1]; indeed it may be argued that the theological division between West and East did not take place till Origen's theological methodology had gained the ascendency in the latter region.

One of the most interesting writers of the second century is Ignatius. He among the Apostolic Fathers approaches closest to the realistic mysticism of Paul - the participation ἐν Χριστῷ. At the same time as Benoit following Th. Preiss has pointed out there is a subtle yet all-important difference. In Romans VI Ignatius pleads that he should be allowed to be the imitator of the passion of his God, and implies that it is by his martyrdom that he reaches to a new birth. Union with Jesus Christ is to be achieved by his martyrdom. Now, in spite of the superficial echoes, this is very unPauline - in the New Testament it is understood that one becomes an imitator of Jesus Christ in His death by baptism; to Ignatius this is only achieved by martyrdom.[2]

At the same time, unlike certain other writers later in the century, Ignatius still has a firm hold on the significance of Christ's own baptism: ἐβαπτίσθη ἵνα τῷ πάθει τὸ ὕδωρ καθαρίσῃ.[3]

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1. Two quite dissimilar examples of this early theological cosmopolitanism may be given. Loofs makes Irenaeus a witness to the theology of Asia Minor (Leitfaden, pp.139ff.), yet he is also one of the greatest Western Fathers. Also, why is it that works of "Western" Apostolic Fathers should be found in Eastern New Testament codices, e.g. Hermas in Siniaticus, and I and II Clement in Alexandrinus unless there was a primitive theological unity?

2. Benoit, op. cit., pp.81f. for full discussion of this point.

3. Ephesians xviii. 2. p.110.

Christ's baptism and death are intimately connected together, and by the latter the waters are said to be cleaned. This idea of the necessity for the waters to be purified is probably connected with the popular idea that the deep was in particular in the possession of the demons, who thus had control over water. Thus Ignatius connects our baptismal cleansing with Christ's victory over the demons, which doubtless he believed was achieved by His death. This motif is peripheral in the New Testament[1], but nevertheless, no-one can deny the Christocentricity of Ignatius' thought on this point.

If contact with the New Testament unity of baptism can be perceived in the writings of Ignatius, the same cannot be said concerning that moralistic homily which has come down to us under the title of II Clement. First of all there is much confusion in the writer's view of the Spirit; in a confused passage in XIV, he seems to think of the Spirit as an eschatological gift, which will be received by those who preserve the flesh in purity. At the same time from the exhortation δεῖ οὖν ἡμᾶς ὡς ναὸν θεοῦ φυλάσσειν τὴν σάρκα , it would appear that the writer believed that in some way the Spirit had already been received.[2] Moreover, he emphasizes the necessity of την σφραγιδα τηρειν[3], in the first

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1. A remote approach to this idea is found in Col. 2:10-15.

2. IX. 3. p.47.

3. VIII. 6. p.47.

place by keeping the flesh pure, and secondly if this is not possible by repentance before it is too late.[1] We can see in the thought of this writer several radical differences from the New Testament emphases. In the first place, the writer lacks any idea of the Holy Spirit as the eschatological ἀρραβών ; instead, he appears to look to a final out-pouring of the Spirit. If such an outlook was prevalent in the second century, it is easy to understand the origin of Montanism. This failure to realize the present reality of the Spirit is probably the root cause of his moralism and emphasis on the "keeping of the seal". Moreover, it is clear that for him repentance is no longer the ethos of the Christian life, but rather an act or series of acts which are performed to cover past sins. The practical understanding of the New Testament unity has begun to disappear.

If the question of post-baptismal sin is just touched upon in II Clement, we find this topic the principal theme of the "Shepherd" of Hermas. It appears at that time in the Church of Rome there were two main parties - one taught that there was no penitence possible for post-baptismal sin, while the other in line with the New Testament outlook believed that by baptism one entered into a life of repentance.[2] Over against both schools, Hermas taught that after Baptism there was one more opportunity

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1. Cf. the whole of VIII.

2. See Benoit, op. cit., pp.117-119.

for sin, but after that the Christian must sin no more.[1] Concerning the nature of the Holy Spirit, Hermas is particularly confusing, though he appears to have disintegrated the Holy Spirit into ἅγια πνεύματά or virtues,[2] and it seems implied that one can receive the Name of the Son of God, but not the power of these spirits. Though for a time the "Shepherd" appears in places to have gained a canonical status, it can hardly be said that his theology played any real part in developing the teaching of the Church. The significance of Hermas for our purpose is that he witnesses to the formal, de-eschatologized sense of repentance then prevalent in the Church.

Taking everything into consideration, very little is related to us concerning the nature of Baptism in the writings of the Apologists. This, however, is not surprising, as the theology of Baptism is scarcely one of the themes by which the faith is commended to those outside. In the writings of Justin, we occasionally encounter phrases reminiscent of the New Testament teaching on Baptism - for example, he connects the baptismal remission of sins with the death of Christ.[3] Nevertheless, Justin retains the same idea of repentance as did Hermas - it is primarily a pre-baptismal act rather than an attitude of the Christian life,

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1. Sim. VIII. xi. 13. p.369.

2. Sim. IX. xiii. 2. p.383.

3. Dial. 13. M.P.G. VI. pp.500f.

though Justin seems to allow post-baptismal repentance for all sins except apostasy.[1] More interesting for our purpose, however, is Justin's explanation of the significance of the baptism of our Lord. In the first place, the descent of the Spirit is explained as showing that He will no longer be given to Jews, but concentrated on the person of Jesus.[2] Not content with this, later in the same work, he argues that the Baptism of Jesus (especially the voice) was a sign given by God to men that Jesus was the Messiah.[3] Probably because of his fear of Adoptionist interpretations, Justin is embarrassed over this incident, and as Benoît has written: "S'il le mentionne, c'est uniquement par fidélité à la tradition evangelique dont il a connaissance, et qui doivent connaître également ses interlocuteurs."[4] This uneasiness of Justin is nothing, however, to the straits to which Melito of Sardis is forced to explain the Baptism of Jesus. He argues that as the sun descends into the ocean just as into a baptistry, so it was fitting that Christ, the King of Heaven should descend into Jordan. Certainly this is rhetoric, but Melito must have had little understanding of the real New Testament significance of Christ's baptism, if he preached like

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1. See the discussion by Benoît, op. cit., pp.154ff. of Justin's views on repentance.

2. Di. 52. 4. M.P.G. VI. c. 589.

3. Di. 88. 8. M.P.G. VI. c. 688.

4. op. cit., p.179.

that.[1]

It would be generally agreed that Irenaeus was the ablest theologian produced by the Church between the Fourth Evangelist and Tertullian. In his writings, Baptism is connected rather with the work of the Holy Spirit than that of Christ. At the same time, we must remember that Irenaeus had a very strong understanding of the unity of the Godhead, and doubtless could not conceive of the Spirit working apart from the Son. Irenaeus' baptismal teaching cannot be understood, without some knowledge of his general doctrine of the relationship of the Holy Spirit to mankind. Adam, he taught, had a partial gift of the Spirit, for he was only created as a child.[2] Before, however, he could advance to receive the fullness of the Spirit, he fell, losing the gift which he already possessed. By Baptism, however, the individual not only receives back that which Adam had lost, but also the fullness of the Spirit to which Adam had never attained. The Spirit is now viewed as the earnest dwelling in the believer preparing him for immortality.[3] Baptism is thus the seal of eternal life, a new birth unto God, which leads to our divinisation and immortality.[4] At the same time, Irenaeus insists that we

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1. Cf. Benoit, op. cit., pp.180f.

2. Adv. Haer. IV. xxxviii. M.P.G. VII. c. 1105ff; Epideixis 12. A.C.W. XVI. p.55.

3. Adv. Haer. V. viii. 1. M.P.G. VII. c. 1141.

4. Epideixis 3. A.C.W. XVI. p.49.

must conserve the Spirit by living a holy life.[1] He allows, however, a place for post-baptismal penitence[2], and this seems to be in the nature of an attitude rather than a church ordinance. Another approach to the New Testament understanding in this respect, is that this penitence is on occasion placed in an eschatological context.[3] There is no real evidence in Irenaeus of any division within the baptismal rite as to the reception of its benefits; in fact he definitely connects the Baptismal act with the reception of the Holy Spirit.[4]

Perhaps, however, the most striking thing about the baptismal teaching of Irenaeus is the total absence of the New Testament motif that Baptism implies participation in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Benoît, in reference to this, makes mention of the work of H. Scheidt who in a study of the early baptismal liturgies, finds this motif strikingly absent also.[5] This failure to apprehend that our baptism is is perhaps the root symptom of the second century's falling away from the New Testament understanding of Baptism. Baptism is no longer connected in any organic way with the "finished work" of

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1. Epideixis 42. A.C.W. XVI. p.74.
2. By implication Adv. Haer. III. xxxiii. M.P.G. VII c. 960ff.
3. Adv. Haer. I. x. 1. M.P.G. VII. c. 549f.
4. Ep. 7. A.C.W. XVI. pp.51f.
5. Benoît, op. cit., p.220 n.94.

Christ - or rather Christ's death and resurrection are not sufficiently understood as the event which has inaugurated the new age. Only Ignatius of the second century writers seems to have had any real understanding of the significance of the Baptism of our Lord. Moreover, this failure to appreciate the fact that in a very real sense the ἔσχατον had arrived in Jesus Christ, seriously affected these writers' understanding of the baptismal gift of the Spirit. Only Irenaeus amongst them seems to have possessed understanding of the Spirit as the ἀρραβών ; too often the others just emphasized the need of τὴν σφραγίδα τηρεῖν , their words seeming to suggest that the present dispensation of the Spirit was only partial, and that the real eschatological gift of the Spirit was still to come (so II Clement). Repentance tended to be an act motivated by fear of the coming judgment, rather than the New Testament attitude that μετάνοια is the only possible attitude open to those who live within the overlap of the ages.

At the same time, the second century brought to the fore notions in relation to baptism which, at the most, are but peripheral in the New Testament. In the first place, there is the view that Baptism is a purification from and a protection against the demons. Barnabas speaks of man being the abode of demons, which is conquered by the Name of the Lord, and recreated afresh by receiving the remission of sins.[1] As we have seen, a

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1. XVI. 7-8. p.262.

somewhat similar idea appears to have been in Ignatius' mind when he spoke of Christ purifying the waters by His death, and we have hints of the same motif in other second century writers. It may be argued that there is New Testament support for such a view of Baptism in St. Paul's teaching in the letter to the Colossians[1], but it must be remembered that the Pauline ἐξουσιαι and ἀρχοντες are very different from the demons which Barnabas and Ignatius have in mind, who resemble rather their counterparts in the Synoptic narratives. No doubt belief in such powers played an important part in the experience of post-Apostolic Christianity, and perhaps those writers who regarded Baptism as a purification against them were making a legitimate application of Jesus' victorious exorcisms in the Gospels. Nevertheless, baptism in the New Testament is never explicitly stated to be a prophylactic against evil spirits. It is an extra-New Testament meaning attached to baptism by the second century writers.

Another meaning which is attached to baptism in the second century is that of φωτισμός, a term which is used in relation to it for the first time by Justin.[2] It appears that by this term, Justin was drawing attention to the illumination given to converts by the coming of Christ, and also to the vision of God received with the gift of the Spirit.[3] This motif of Justin's

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1. Col. 2:10ff.

2. I Ap. 61. M.P.G. VI. c. 421.

3. Cf. Benoit, op. cit., pp.165-170.

seems to have been, however, a legitimate development of New Testament teaching - the writer of Hebrews refers to Christians as φωτισθέντας .[1] All that Justin is doing by the use of this term is to interpret baptism with New Testament sanction in relation to his own peculiar outlook upon the Christian faith.

Another peripheral New Testament idea which received considerable development in the course of the second century is that of baptism as the "lavacrum regenerationis". It may be noted that the only time this idea is mentioned in the New Testament (excepting John 3:3-5 on the exegesis of Flemington, op. cit., pp.86f.) is in its latest strata - Tit. 3:5. This idea, however, took considerable time before it gained a hold on second century baptismal theology. Barnabas, for example, does not go any further than the Pauline doctrine of a new creation:

> Pour Barnabé, le baptême est une nouvelle création, anticipant, dans l'éon actuel, celle qui aura lieu dans l'éon à venir. Par le baptême, l'homme est créé à nouveau pour cet éon futur, il est déjà recréé, il a donc par là la promesse, le gage de sa participation au Royaume de Dieu.[2]

In Justin, however, the idea of regeneration is met with alongside that of a new Creation[3], though it is difficult to see what exact meaning he gave to the term. This fact is probably due to that because of the wide diffusion of mystery-religion ideas

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1. Heb. 6:4.

2. Benoit, op. cit., p.41.

3. I Ap. 61. M.P.G. VI. c. 420f.

in the Graeco-Roman world at that time, the term was often used, though it represented no clearly distinguishable idea - somewhat analogous in regards to indistinctness as the term "sacrifice" in much of the popular Christianity of today. To Irenaeus, however, baptism and regeneration seem to be almost identical terms. By regeneration man is restored to the image and similitude of God, which had been lost by the Fall.[1] At the same time, Irenaeus also brings the idea of rebirth into relationship with the resurrection of the dead[2]; thus the second birth is intimately connected both with a return to the primitive state, and with the future eschatological restoration. Nevertheless, regeneration is connected not with the death but primarily with the birth of Christ[3] - and it is in this connection that Irenaeus becomes the first theologian of the Virgin Mary.[4] Though rebirth is originally effected by the incarnation and virgin birth of Christ, it becomes ours through the work of the Holy Spirit in baptism.[5] We can see, therefore, that in Irenaeus the idea of regeneration centring on Christ's incarnation and birth has replaced the Pauline idea of death and resurrection with Christ,

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1. Adv. Haer. V. i. 3. M.P.G. VII. c. 1123.

2. Ibid. V. xv. 1. M.P.G. VII. c. 1163f.

3. Ibid. IV. xxxiii. 4. M.P.G. VII. c. 1074f.

4. Ibid. III. xxii. 4. M.P.G. VII. c. 958f. and V. xix. c. 1175f.; also Epid. 32. A.C.W. XVI. p.68.

5. Adv. Haer. III. xvii. M.P.G. VII. c. 929ff.

which is centred on our Lord's baptism and passion. This is fully in line with Irenaeus' stress upon the salvific obedience of Christ, which is realized by His entering human life in all its stages and thus restoring to man his lost likeness to God.

Not only has the second century started to depart in its understanding of baptism from the New Testament foundation, it has also commenced either to import other conceptions, or expand peripheral New Testament ideas to give an account of the doctrine. The abler the theologian as in the case of Irenaeus, the more throughgoing is the fashion in which this is done.

Nevertheless, there seems to be no real evidence until the time of Tertullian (or does the rite described in the Eastern versions of Hippolytus' Apostolic Tradition date from before the time of Tertullian?) that various aspects of the baptismal gifts were associated with differing parts of the initiation ritual.[1] At the same time, we have to face Dix's contention as to whether it is likely that the Catholics would have borrowed in this respect, from what was known to have been the Gnostic practice. Do the Eastern versions of the Apostolic Tradition (which even Lampe after comparing them with other statements of Hippolytus on the question of Baptism, tends to think are nearest the original) really reflect second century baptismal practice in the Church at

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1. For the evidence for this statement, see Lampe, op. cit., chap. VI., pp.97-148.

Rome? Very possibly the work does, for as we have seen, during the second century the Christocentric unity of baptism began to disappear. Any sense that our baptism is the incorporation into the "one baptism" of Christ seems to have vanished. Once the understanding of that unity is lost, Baptism will baturally be come to be thought of as a series of "gifts" - which severally may be connected with various parts of the initiation ritual. The rather (on the surface) incoherent statements on the matter in Acts would give plenty of opportunity for such a development.

Tertullian is the first writer to make a clear distinction between water-baptism and Spirit-baptism; we do not receive the Holy Spirit, but are only cleansed for His reception which comes through the laying-on of hands and prayer.[1] At the same time, as Lampe has shown[2], Tertullian is not absolutely clear on this point. For example, in the early sections of De Baptismo, he argues at length that all waters can, through the power of the Spirit which rests upon them, convey the sacramental power of sanctification. Sanctification in baptism according to Tertullian comes through "holy water" - charged with the power of the Spirit. It is this metaphysic of Tertullian which stresses the salvific efficacy of sanctified sacramental media by themselves, which later as a pre-supposition was one of the chief causes of the

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1. De Baptismo 6 and 8. I. c. 1314f. and 1316f.

2. op. cit., pp.160ff.

Donatist schism. It is not very far from "sanctified water" to speak about "holy hands" - and to stress that a sacrament can only be efficacious if it is given by a holy minister. Moreover, according to Tertullian the regeneration of the believer is through the water, and yet it is denied that at this moment the Spirit is given.[1] We shall not be far wrong, I believe, if we trace this confusion in Tertullian's understanding of the work of the Holy Spirit in baptism to the influence of the narratives concerning laying-on of hands in Acts.[2]

Thus far, we can regard Tertullian as a witness to the disintegration in the second century of the New Testament unity of baptismal doctrine, but there are other facets to his thought. He possessed a real sense of the presence of Christ within the fellowship of the Church. He can tell the penitent that when they cast themselves at the knees of the members of the Church, they are handling and beseeching Christ.[3] Furthermore, he can declare that where the Church is, there is the attestation of the three witnesses, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, for the Church is the body of the Three.[4] Thus, it can be said that baptism (using the term to cover the whole complex of rites) does

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1. De Anima 41. II. c. 764.
2. Lampe, op. cit., p.161.
3. De Poen. X. I. c. 1356.
4. De Bapt. 6. I. c. 1315.

incorporate the believer into the fullness of Christ. Moreover, in relation to the Apostles, when the question as to their baptism arose, Tertullian could say that their undivided closeness to Christ perhaps availed to make up its lack.[1]

Unfortunately Tertullian's legalism spoils his really deep insight into the nature of the Church. In the first place, he regards pre-baptismal repentance as a human achievement, and hence essentially divorced from the gift of the Holy Spirit and the remission of sins.[2] Furthermore, Tertullian never thinks of baptism being effective "ex opere operato" - repentance is the price which God has determined for pardon, and to think that God must confer forgiveness on every baptized person is to turn his generosity into slavery.[3] Repentance, whether pre- or post-baptismal is always conceived by Tertullian as a human activity. It is due to human effort in repentance that the grace of forgiveness of sins and the Holy Spirit is received in Baptism; it is due to human repentance that those graces are retained.

Here I believe, is to be found the historical origin of Augustine's separation of the graces of conversion and perseverence from that of baptism. Tertullian conceived of pre-baptismal

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1. De Bapt. 12. I. c. 1322f.
2. Ibid. 10. I. c. 1319f.
3. De Poen. 6. I. c. 1349.

repentance and perseverence in the faith as human activities, and thus separated them from what was given in baptism. Augustine with his deeper insight into the nature of grace recognized that conversion and perseverance depended upon the Divine mercy, but the whole tenour of the North African theological tradition prevented him from relating this grace with that which is conferred in baptism. The damage which Tertullian did to the doctrine of baptism was not through his distinction between Spirit and water-baptism, which at the most was rather half-hearted and hedged about with a number of protective corollaries, but to the fact that he failed to relate repentance and perseverance to the baptismal incorporation into Christ.

In Cyprian, we find many of the same tensions which we have previously traced in the man whom he took for his theological master - Tertullian. Even more than the latter, he had a real sense of the unity of Christ and His people. In appealing for funds to ransom Christians he can use the text, "As many of you have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ" to prove that Christ is to be contemplated in our captive brethren.[1] He can also liken the union of Christ and His people to the mingled water and wine in a mixed chalice.[2] At the same time, Cyprian insists that this holiness of the Church should visibly manifest

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1. Ep. lix. 2. (V. Cyprian III. 2.) p.668.

2. Ep. lxiii. 12. (V. Cyprian III. 2.) pp.710f.

itself in the priesthood. In choosing a priest, the people should be careful to call an upright and unstained man, whose prayers will be heard by God. From a sinful priest, Cyprian stresses, it is necessary for the people to separate.[1] Even when Cyprian refers to the Church being composed both of wheat and tares (a passage so often quoted by St. Augustine), it must be remembered that the point Cyprian is making is that the penitent lapsed should be received back into the Church - it does not effect in any way the question of the holiness of the priesthood - for any lapsed priest could only be received back as a layman.[2] Thus, we can see the extension of Tertullian's view of holiness adhering to sacramental media, now being applied to the clergy - one step nearer to the position of the Donatists.

In relation to the gift of the Spirit in baptism, Cyprian asserts that the fullness of the Spirit is given in baptism (taken as a single complex rite), and therefore he will not allow any diminution in the gift of the Spirit either to infants[3] or to clinics.[4] Moreover, Cyprian implicitly recognizes baptism as the source of the whole Christian life; if a heretic could be baptized he argued, he could also receive remission of sins,

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1. Ep. lxvii. 2, 3. (V. Cyprian III. 2.) pp.736f.
2. Ep. liv. 3. (V. Cyprian III. 2.) pp.622f.
3. Ep. lxiv. 3. (V. Cyprian III. 2.) pp.718f.
4. Ep. lxix. 12. Cf. 14. (V. Cyprian III. 2.) pp.760, 763.

sanctification and become the temple of God.[1]

In spite of this, however, Cyprian divides the baptismal gifts among the various parts of the initiation rite. Regeneration does not belong to the time when hands are laid on for the reception of the Holy Spirit, but so that the believer already born may receive the Spirit.[2] He defends this position by arguing that Adam was first made before the Spirit was given him. At the same time, like Tertullian, Cyprian insists that the Holy Spirit must be present with the water if a man is to be born again in baptism. Therefore, because the Holy Spirit is not present among heretics, they cannot confer baptism.[3] Thus like Tertullian, though he connects the gift of the Spirit with the laying on of hands, yet he finds the presence of the Holy Spirit necessary for the efficacy of the whole of the rite.

Just like Tertullian also, Cyprian insists on the need of preserving baptism - though equal grace isgiven to all in the rite, yet this can be afterwards either increased or diminished by the believer's conduct.[4] Moreover, almsgiving can be used to cancel post-baptismal sins.[5] In one very interesting passage, Cyprian even goes so far as to contrast water-baptism with baptism by

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1. Ep. 1 xxiii. 12. (V. Cyprian III. 2.) pp.786f.
2. Ep. lxxiv. 7. (V. Cyprian III. 2.) p.804.
3. Ep. lxxiv. 5. (V. Cyprian III. 2.) p.803.
4. Ep. lxxv. 14. (V. Cyprian III. 2.) p.763.
5. Op. Elem. 2. (V. Cyprian III.) p.374.

martyrdom much to the former's disadvantage. In baptism by water one receives but the forgiveness of sins; baptism by blood confers the crown of all virtues.[1] Though it is possible to discount this passage as rhetoric, yet it does give one the uneasy feeling that Cyprian could not really see the whole of the Christian life stemming out of the baptismal gift.

The greatness of Cyprian, however, lay in his attempt to preserve the baptismal rite as a unity. Against his Roman opponents who tended to differentiate sharply between Spirit and water baptism, Cyprian insisted on the unity of the Spirit's working in the whole baptismal complex.[2] At the same time, the evidence of Acts was too strong for him not to associate in some way the gift of the Spirit with the laying-on of hands.

It is not here, however, that Cyprian's baptismal teaching failed. In the first place, his failure, like that of Tertullian, consisted in not being able to conceive of the whole of the Christian life flowing from the baptismal incorporation into Christ. Secondly, he erred in stressing overmuch the necessity for the actual holiness of the Church (and in this the Donatists can claim him as their patron), instead of viewing its holiness as essentially eschatological. He failed to see that in the New Testament sense, the Church is holy not because of its members'

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1. Ad Fortunatum Praef. 4. (V. Cyprian III.) p.319.

2. Lampe, op. cit., pp.170-6, for detailed evidence on Cyprian's attempt to do this.

achievements, but because of their repentance in the eschatological situation. This insight was later embodied in the dictum of Optatus of Milevis that the Church's holiness depends upon its sacraments not its members. Once again an error in eschatology leads to a defect in sacramental teaching.

No more satisfactory in their teaching on baptism were upholders of the Roman tradition who opposed Cyprian. Owing to the size of this diocese, disintegration of the baptismal rite was far more advanced than elsewhere in the Church. Water baptism was regularly administered by the presbyters, but consignation and laying-on of hands, the prerogative of the bishop, used to take place much later. As could be expected, the tendency would be to devalue as much as possible the earlier part of the initiation ritual, and to lay stress on the latter. Thus, there grew up in Rome a radical distinction between water-baptism and Spirit-baptism.

The only work which has come down to us, expressing the views on baptism of the Roman party, is the treatise De Rebaptismate, written to combat the view put forward by the North Africans that those baptized in heresy on coming over to the Catholic Church ought to be baptized again. This treatise is so confused in its teaching, so easily refutable by anyone who had an understanding of the position of Cyprian, that the mystery is why it ever managed to survive. In this work, the writer argues that there are three baptisms: of water, blood and Spirit - each one

of which can in case of necessity be sufficient for salvation. On the other hand, the Holy Spirit may be given by the imposition of the hands of the bishop alone, though this should have been preceded by water-baptism[1], the writer then going on to quote the example of Cornelius as a case when the gift of the Spirit is divorced from water-baptism entirely.[2] The value of baptism in fact only consists in the power of the invocation of the name of Christ over the believer.[3] The power resides in the name not in the minister of baptism, and in the only shrewd point he makes in the treatise, he asks his opponents what is the effect of baptism by an ignorant bishop within the Catholic Church.[4] Thus, the author opposes the power of the name of Christ which can be invoked outside the Church to the personal holiness of the minister of the sacrament. At the same time he gives us no insight into what is given to the believer by the invocation of the Name. It does not confer the Holy Spirit, for He can only be given within the Church, while the Name can be received outside.[5] At least the North African insistence on the necessity of a holy minister (dangerous as it was) did not savour so much

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1. De Rebapt. 3. (V. Cyprian III. 3.) p.73.
2. Ibid. 5. (V. Cyprian III. 3.) pp.74f.
3. Ibid. 6, 7. (V. Cyprian III. 3.) pp.76ff.
4. Ibid. 10. (V. Cyprian III. 3.) p.81.
5. Ibid. 10.(V. Cyprian III. 3.) p.82.

of magic (even if magic of rather an ineffectual kind) as did the baptismal theology of the author of De Rebaptismate.

In the Donatist controversy, the idea of personal holiness being necessary to the ministers of the sacraments was taken to its logical conclusion by the schismatics. Because they suspected certain Catholic bishops were "traditores", the whole Catholic Church was defiled because it kept in communion with these men. Therefore, its sacraments possessed no efficacy, and any converts to Donatism from the Catholic Church had to be rebaptized. It was the Church's holiness, according to the Donatists, which guaranteed the holiness of her sacraments. The first great Catholic opponent of Donatism, Optatus of Milevis, countered this by insisting that the sacraments were first and foremost gifts of God to the Church. Because of this the Donatists were brothers of the Catholics through sacraments albeit they were bad brothers.[1] Nevertheless, Donatist baptism was not efficacious for salvation, until the person baptized was received into the Catholic Church. The holiness of that Church was not to be measured by the achievement of her individual members, but is derived from the sacraments which are given her.[2] Optatus does not face, however, the possible counter-question as to whether because the Donatists possessed the holy sacrament of baptism,

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1. Con. Don. I. iii. (V.) cf. IV. ii. pp.4f. and p.106.

2. Ibid. II. i. (V.) p.32.

their Church was not in some way holy. Augustine answered this by drawing the distinction between valid and efficacious sacraments - allowing to a merely valid sacrament no salvific power. The holiness of the Church then consists in the fact that she possesses effective sacraments - thus it is not the possession of sacraments alone which makes the Church holy. According to Augustine, the holiness of the Church lies not in the fact that she possesses sacraments, which are the gifts of God, but because she possesses effective sacraments through being united in the bond of charity - another gift of God. Thus, in the last resort Augustine gives a different answer to that of Optatus as to where the holiness of the Church lies. The root of Augustine's answer to the Donatists is that the Church's universality is the ground of her holiness - the sign that she possesses the gift of charity because she is in communion with the Church throughout the world.

It must be admitted that Optatus lays a better foundation for the understanding as to where the holiness of the Church lies. He is aware that its holiness lies rather in the gift of God than in the attainment of its members. Augustine likewise refuses to ground the holiness of the Church in its members' achievements, but tends rather to place it in its universality, though no doubt, he would have regarded this universality as the gift of God. According to Optatus, sacraments are eschatological reminders as to where the Church's holiness really exists; on

Augustine's showing her holiness can be too easily confused with her standing within the world.

Optatus, because of the specific controversial nature of his work, says very little concerning the nature of the baptismal gift, though Lampe detects in his words about the imposition of hands an approach to the New Testament view, rather than that of De Rebaptismate.[1] Though a canon against the rebaptism of heretics was drawn up by the Council of Arles in 311, it must not be thought that the whole of the Western Church went over to the theology of De Rebaptismate. Rather the whole period was one of confusion as to what precisely was the working of the Holy Spirit in baptism - a fact amply documented by Lampe's book.

A good example of Western teaching on baptism is that of St. Ambrose - who may be regarded as a co-founder with St. Augustine of the ethos of the future Western Church. It is difficult to find in his writings any rigorous distinction between Spirit-baptism and water-baptism - in fact he says that the efficacy of the baptismal water is not due to the power of water itself, but to the presence of the Holy Spirit.[2] By baptism was conferred upon the believer the remission of sins[3], the new birth[4], adoption[5], restoration of the image of God[6] and

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1. op. cit., p.227.
2. De Spiritu 1. 77. XVI. c. 752.
3. De Spiritu iii. 138. XVI. c. 843; Expos. in Luc. II. 79. XV. c. 1663.
4. De Myst. 59. XVI. c. 426; De Spiritu I. 76. XVI. c. 752, and II. 64-6. XVI. c. 787.
5. De Spiritu III. 68. XVI. c. 825.
6. De Spiritu I. 79, 80. XVI. c. 752.

the hope of everlasting life.[1] At the same time, Ambrose regards consignation as the spiritual seal in which the sevenfold gift of the Spirit is received.[2] Thus it appears, like Tertullian and Cyprian, Ambrose tries to minimize as far as possible any division of the Holy Spirit's working in the baptismal rite. Nevertheless, Ambrose still does not possess any insight of the Christian living from baptism - and it is he who first gave form to the Western practice of penance.[3] Ambrose probably gave the best possible interpretation of baptism on the basis of the tradition to which he was heir - but it did not really resemble the unity of the New Testament understanding.

In concluding our survey, we must draw attention to the almost total disappearance of the New Testament understanding that baptism meant participation in the fullness of Christ's eschatological act. Baptism became a question of various gifts, whose connection were rarely clearly seen, rather than of incorporation ἐν Χριστῷ . Mainly perhaps because of the narratives in Acts, a tendency arose to distinguish between the remission of sins given in baptism, and the Spirit conferred in confirmation. No longer was the gift of the Spirit thought of

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1. De Spiritu III. 64. XVI. c. 824.

2. De Myst. 42. XVI. c. 419.

3. Cf. Homes-Dudden, St. Ambrose, (Oxford, 1935), v.2., pp.634ff.

as participation in Christ's Messianic anointing which He received as He entered upon His eschatological mission, and of which the Church as a sharer in that mission also partook. In other words, the Spirit was no longer regarded from the point of Christology. The eschatological mission of Jesus Christ became only the source of the forgiveness of sins, rather than the ground of the Christian life. The necessity became to preserve the gifts conferred in baptism and confirmation rather to live from one's baptism.

Furthermore, repentance was loosed from the eschatological tension. One ought to do penance because of the coming judgment, but repentance as the necessary ethos of the Christian life in the overlap of the ages is no longer recognized. Baptism was no longer either a Christocentric or an eschatological sacrament. If the Church in the fourth century had erected its doctrine of the nature of Christ on the basis of its baptismal theology - the result would have been too terrible to contemplate.

Baptism had become so devoid of Christological content that Augustine in a semi-irenical gesture to the Donatists, in order that they need not be rebaptized, could reduce it to a mere sign. Such an attenuated view of baptism was certain to fall victim to the urgent predestinarianism of Augustine.

Chapter VI.

Eschatology from New Testament Times to Augustine

I. New Testament Eschatology

Perhaps the most significant discovery of twentieth century New Testament scholarship is that of the all-pervading nature of the eschatological expectation which is enshrined in the pages of the New Testament. It is almost as hard for us today to appreciate the pre-Weiss and Schweitzer exegesis of the Gospels of scholars such as Harnack, as to sympathize with the allegorical approach of Origen and his followers. Whether we believe eschatology in the New Testament is primarily "realized" or "futuristic", whether we argue for "demythologization", "de-eschatologization", or merely for the repristination of the concepts of that book, we are all united by the recognition that eschatology is there, and there in such a way that it cannot be ignored.

In this section of the chapter it is hoped to outline the main eschatological motifs of the New Testament in order to provide a basis for our further study of the development of the Christian hope until the time of St. Augustine. Such an account because of the limitations of the thesis will have to be brief - and in such a field as this, brevity leads as a general rule to a certain amount of injustice. All the evidence cannot be thoroughly discussed, so one is forced to rely upon the findings of other scholars and on occasion even to choose between them without showing adequate reason, while at the same time there is scarcely opportunity for one of the subtler and more valuable tasks of

New Testament exegesis - the relating of eschatology to the fundamental framework and motifs of a writer's thought. These defects are acknowledged at the outset of this study, and the apology is offered that it is better for these faults to exist than this topic should not be treated at all in the course of our argument.

In this section, it is hoped to show that throughout the New Testament, two main currents of eschatological thought are found together: the belief that the great consummation is still to come, and the recognition that this end is in a certain way already being realized in the present. To the New Testament writers these two streams of thought were in no way thought of as being contradictory to one another, but were just two facets of a single eschatological consciousness. In order to demonstrate this we shall first consider the eschatological teaching of the main sections of the New Testament, i.e. the teaching of Jesus according to the Synoptics, the Pauline Epistles, the Johannine writings, as well as the teaching of the other New Testament writers. Then we shall discuss briefly the content of some of the chief eschatological words of the New Testament.

In the teaching of Jesus according to the Synoptics, the great consummation, the coming of the Kingdom of God, is primarily future - entry into that Kingdom is a future event[1], in fact so

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1. Mt. 7:21.

much in the future that Jesus can portray entry into the Kingdom as the opposite parallel to being cast into Gehenna.[1] Even for Jesus Himself the Kingdom lies in the future - after His death.[2] The day of the Son of Man is still to come[3], and it is not a part of Jesus' earthly mission to promise the honours of that day to His followers.[4] So dominant is the futuristic strain in Jesus' eschatological thought, that it is almost possible to interpret all the main passages which seem to support "realized" eschatology as being in accordance with a purely futuristic view of the coming of the Kingdom.[5] At the same time, there are certain passages which resist such an interpretation, and fit

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1. Cf. Mk. 9:43 and 47.

2. Mk. 14:25.

3. Luke 17:22ff.

4. Cf. Mk. 10:35-41.

5. See for an extremely plausible example of this, R. H. Fuller, The Mission and Achievement of Jesus, pp.20-49. One suspects that a great deal of the popularity of the realized eschatology interpretation of the teaching of Jesus among British exegetes lies not because it provides the best key for the objective understanding of the eschatological teaching of the Gospels, but because it enables them to evade the possibility that Jesus was deceived in His hopes for the future. As G. R. Beasley-Murray has shown in the early chapters of Jesus and the Future such an attitude of mind on the part of exegetes led to quite a large extent to the distrust of Mk. 13 as really representing the teaching of Jesus. It is perhaps symptomatic of this attitude in British theological circles that there is so much discussion of Bultmann's radical views concerning the New Testament and his plea for "demythologization", but very little about the equally learned thesis of Werner, who follows in the steps of Schweitzer, just as Bultmann is the real successor to Wrede.

better the view that in some way the Kingdom is already present. The Sabbath law can be set aside, as the Son of Man Who is the Lord of the Sabbath is already here.[1] Moreover, Jesus' reply to John concerning Himself cannot be simply interpreted as regarding the signs of the near advent of a future golden age, as Fuller argues.[2] Surely Jesus' contemporaries were particularly blessed in that they already saw in their midst the presence of the Kingdom, not just because they saw the advance signs of its inbreaking. If the latter only is meant, it is hard to see that they were very much more privileged than the prophets and kings of Old Testament times, whom surely Jesus recognized as seeing the Kingdom of God from afar.[3]

Perhaps, however, the most difficult facet of Jesus'

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1. Mk. 2:28. The view that ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου really represents an Aramaic phrase meaning "anyone" or "man in general" has always seemed to my mind singularly unconvincing. If Jesus had really said this, he would have broken completely with the Old Testament insistence on the absoluteness of God's claim upon human life - and where else in the Synoptics do we find such evidence for a similar "humanism" in Jesus' teaching? Rather, I believe that this passage ought to be interpreted in line with the Jewish belief that the Torah would remain as valid till the end of the age. This view concerning the Law seems to have been held by Jesus - Mk. 5:17ff. Cf. also in this respect Lk. 16:16a.

2. Mt. 11:2-6. It is admitted that Is. 61:1 the equivalent to καὶ πτωχοὶ εὐαγγελίζονται refers to the work of the messenger who is to proclaim the coming saving activity of God, but surely Is. 35:5-7 (equivalent to vv.4-5a) refers to the manifestation of the glory of God described in 35:1-2, and is not to be taken with verses 3 and 4, which is a mere exhortatory parenthesis.

3. Lk. 10:23f.

eschatological teaching for us to understand is his insistance that the Kingdom would arrive in power in the near future.[1] Moreover, it is difficult to equate such a coming in power with Jesus' own Resurrection, as this Advent does not seem to be promised in the immediate future. Only "some" (τινες) will not taste of death till they see the Kingdom of God come with power;[2] Jesus speaks to his disciples of the days when the bridegroom shall be taken away from them, implying that for a time he will be absent.[3] Furthermore, Jesus' exhortations to his disciples warning them of the persecutions they are likely to meet, can probably be best understood as implying that there will be a period of time between the death of Jesus and the coming of the Kingdom in power.[4] In Mark 13, which the present writer holds

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1. Mk. 9:1; Mt. 10:23.

2. Mk. 9:1.

3. This verse has been impugned on two grounds. The one, that it seems out of place in the early ministry of Jesus, depends upon the highly dubious premise that Mark was presenting a strictly chronological account of Jesus' ministry. The other objection is that this saying is a community product to explain fasting in the early community. Of course, this is possible, but until some objective criteria for "community products" can be established, it is hard to place such an explanation in a higher category than that of a possible suggestion. If the saying is a community-product it is well worth asking why Mark found it necessary to give the saying an explicit Sitz im Leben in Jesus' own ministry. Furthermore, the saying is so vague as hardly to be of value as a Church rule. If it was as explicit as the rules about fasting in the "Didache", there might be reason for suspecting it.

4. E.g. Mt. 10:17-22; 34-38.

as truly reflecting the eschatological teaching of Jesus[1], the fall of Jerusalem is regarded as some kind of foreshadowing of the end. All this evidence points to the fact that Jesus taught that the Kingdom would arrive in power in the near but not immediate future.

The acceptance of this view, however, immediately raises the problem as to whether Jesus was deceived or deceiving in the hope which He proclaimed. Straightaway the Christian believer feels that the reality of the doctrine of the Incarnation is being threatened. A further question, however, needs to be asked: in what categories other than those which He used, could Jesus have intelligibly expressed His message to His contemporaries? As Cullman has argued at length[2], the basic concept of time held by the New Testament writers is the "naive-linear" one, which is marked by a strong sense of "before" and "after". On the other hand, as Dr. John Marsh has pointed out in criticism of Cullman[3], the Biblical view of time is not one of successive "chronoi" completely undifferentiated from one another in value and significance. Rather the various "chronoi" gain their

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1. For a defence of such a position, see the two books of G. R. Beasley-Murray, Jesus and the Future (London, 1954) and A Commentary on Mark 13 (London, 1957).

2. In Christ and Time.

3. The Fullness of Time (London, 1952), pp.179f.

significance from their proximity or otherwise to a "kairos" - the time of a mighty saving act of God.[1] The only way in which it was possible for Jesus to express the significance of the time of His generation was to connect it directly with the great saving act of God - the Coming of the Kingdom. If Jesus had said "every moment since I have come bears with it an eternal significance" - His language would have been completely unintelligible to His disciples. They could not conceive of time gaining its significance because of its relationship to eternal values (a Platonic doctrine of which they did not possess the slightest notion) - instead to them time gained its significance because of its close proximity to a saving action of God. Why then did Jesus say or suggest that the Kingdom was soon to arrive, but not straightaway? Let us consider the alternatives: if He had said the Kingdom is here, the disciples would have expected that God's lordship would be everywhere acknowledged and His Glory manifested. If He had said on the other hand, that the Kingdom would arrive after many centuries, He would have emptied for His disciples the time of their own generation of all positive content. Neither statement would have expressed His message. So He was forced to say that the Kingdom was near, so near that it was already in some ways breaking in, yet His followers must

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1. In using the words "chronos" and "kairos" the writer is not suggesting that such a differentiation in meaning is suggested by their usage in Greek literature or even in the LXX and New Testament. However, since these terms have a generally-accepted meaning in contemporary theological discussion, the writer uses them without prejudice as to their origin.

must still be prepared to face persecution and suffering until the Kingdom came with power. Jesus expressed His message in the only way possible within the historically-conditioned concepts which were available to Him.[1]

We see, therefore, that for Jesus the Kingdom lies primarily in the future, yet in a certain way it is already present so that men even during His own ministry were in vital contact with its activity. We must remember, however, that we have scarcely any right to expect very much about realized eschatology in the teaching of Jesus, given by Him during His earthly ministry - because until His death, Jesus could not regard this ministry as

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1. Whether concepts drawn from the Greek or the Hebrew tradition best express to us the typically Biblical understanding of time must be a question of perennial theological discussion. The danger of using of Greek concepts, i.e., speaking of each moment as being of eternal significance, is that it tends to empty time of its historical content - and any such tendency is alien to the faith of the Bible. On the other hand, the danger with the Hebraic view which is orientated solely on the future saving action of God (which of course to the Christian can only mean the "parousia") is that it prevents due appreciation and understanding of movements within "chronos" - and thus leads to a failure to understand development within history. What we must not do is to think that the Biblical concepts are the best categories for us to comprehend the Biblical teaching about time. If anything, the present writer would maintain that even in regard to this very understanding of time, the Biblical revelation on this matter shows the inadequacy of the categories with which it worked. To say that the categories of the Bible were perfectly sufficient to express the Word of God which came in that revelation (or even to say that they are the best humanly possible) is really to commit oneself to realized eschatology with a vengeance. Perfection in human categories arrived (by development) on earth two thousand years ago, and we have since fallen away from it.

being fulfilled.[1] Before His death, it was impossible for Jesus to give Himself an unambiguous position in His own eschatological teaching. This fact immediately becomes obvious when we compare Jesus' eschatological teaching with that of St. Paul. The centre of the Pauline Gospel is Jesus Christ and the salvation which He brought, the Christian life is ἐν Χριστῳ and from Christ. The Christian not only shares in the life[2] and death[3] of Christ, but he also partakes of his Lord's resurrection and ascension.[4] It is because of this that the content of Pauline eschatological teaching is primarily Christological.[5]

At the same time, there is continually present in the letters of St. Paul the expectancy of the "parousia" - a hope which shows no sign of diminishing between I Thessalonians and Philippians.[6] The argument that there is a developing tendency in Pauline thought away from the expectation of an early "parousia" owing to the comparative scarcity of references to this subject in the later

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1. This point is well made by Fuller, op. cit., chap.III, pp.50ff.
2. Gal.2:20.
3. Romans 6:1-11.
4. Col.3:1ff.
5. See for an excellent study of this point, M. Goguel, "Le caractère, à la fois actuel et futur, du salut dans la théologie paulinienne", in Essays Presented to C. H. Dodd, ed. Davies and Daube, pp.322-41.
6. Cf. Phil. 3:20 and 4:5.

epistles as compared with Thessalonians and I Corinthians really disregards the fundamental fact concerning the Pauline correspondence - that it was primarily of an occasional nature and arose out of the very contemporary and local problems of the early churches. There is about Paul's teaching and mission an eschatological urgency, and in all probability he regarded his own apostleship as an eschatological phenomenon. It seems that his language about filling up the sufferings of the Christ in II Cor. 1:3-5 and Col. 1:24 are best interpreted in relation to the Messianic woes which must necessarily precede the end.[1] It is such a concept as this, that lies behind the almost feverish plans of Paul to spread the Gospel far and wide, as described in Romans 15:16-25; one almost suspects that Paul had cognizance of some saying of Jesus as Mk. 13:10. Moreover, Paul fully accepted the Early Church's understanding of itself as the "eschatological congregation" - the people upon whom the ends of the ages had come.[2]

At the same time, there are ample references in the Pauline writings to the fact that the "eschaton" has already entered into Christian experience. Anyone who is ἐν Χριστῷ is a καινὴ κτίσις [3], the present moment is the day of salvation

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1. I owe this suggestion to Prof. T. Manson.

2. I Cor. 10:11.

3. II Cor. 5:17.

and on occasion Paul has to remind his readers that the Kingdom of God is not just eating and drinking but is righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit[1] - an argument which implies that for Paul the Kingdom was already present in the life of the Church. Already are believers transferred from the Kingdom of darkness to the Kingdom of the Son of God.[2]

In several ways, the text Romans 14:17 is of importance to us. It brings into focus the connection in Pauline thought between the Spirit and the Kingdom of God. St. Paul connects the Spirit also with the resurrection of Christ[3] and with the resurrection-life of the believer.[4] In II Corinthians, however[5], St. Paul refers to the Spirit which has been given to us by God as the ἀρραβών - earnest, or part-payment security. The Spirit Who is the motive-power behind the resurrection-life of the believer, is also the pledge given to the believer before the Resurrection takes place at the "parousia" of Christ. As N. Q. Hamilton has written:

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1. Romans 14:17.

2. Col. 1:13. Cullman has argued in his essay "The Kingship of Christ and the Church in the New Testament" in The Early Church, pp.105-137, for a distinction maintained by Paul between the Kingdom of God and of Christ. The distinction, I believe, founders on such texts as Romans 14:17.

3. Romans 1:4.

4. Romans 8:11.

5. II Cor. 1:22, 5:5.

> Just as in the Synoptics the future kingdom breaks into the present in the action of Jesus, so in Paul the future age has broken into the present in the action of the Spirit. The role of the Spirit in Paul's teaching is similar to that of the kingdom in the Synoptics.[1]

Thus in St. Paul also the two strands inextricably joined together in the teaching of Jesus are once more found united together in a very similar manner. The future Kingdom of God has already entered the experience of believers because of the work of the Holy Spirit in their lives. The one significant difference between the eschatologies of Jesus and Paul lies in the Christ-content of the Pauline teaching, which is accounted for by the fact that for Paul the first-fruits from the dead had already arisen.

The same two eschatological strands are represented in the other apostolic writings. In Hebrews, the Day of the Lord is regarded as lying in the future, and Christians are exhorted not to neglect common worship for that Day is approaching.[2] Yet, though God will once more shake Heaven and earth, Christian believers have received a kingdom which cannot be shaken, and it is because of this that they ought to offer true worship and gratitude towards God.[3] Already the consummation of Israel's

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1. The Holy Spirit and Eschatology in Paul, p.23. For a much fuller development of this exegesis, see ibid., pp.12-25.

2. Heb. 10:25.

3. Heb. 12:28.

history has been reached[1], and the present time is one ultimate decision.[2] Men must strive to enter the promised rest of God[3], lest they be judged not to have reached it, as the Israelites were judged of old because of their disobedience.[4] Thus, as for Paul, salvation to the Writer of Hebrews is both present and future, yet this tension is overcome for the believer by faith. As C. K. Barrett has written commenting on Heb. 11:1 :

> Faith means a confident reliance upon the future, a conviction of the invisible. These are not various elements in, but aspects of, faith. There are not two faiths, one of which looks to the future and believes that in the future good will come from God - an apocalyptic faith; and another, which penetrates beyond the world of phenomena to that of timeless and ideal truth - a "Platonic" faith. There is but one faith, an eschatological faith which is convinced of future good because it knows that the good for which it hopes already exists invisibly in God.[5]

It is thus that in this writer the tension between "futuristic" and "inaugurated" eschatology is resolved.

This tension is perhaps not so apparent on the surface of I Peter, which may justly be regarded as the most typical product in the New Testament of ordinary first century Christianity. The author shares the futuristic outlook in regard to eschatological

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1. Heb. 9:26b.
2. Heb. 2:1-4.
3. Heb. 4:11.
4. Heb. 4:1.
5. "The Eschatology of the Epistle to the Hebrews" in Essays Presented to C. H. Dodd, ed. Davies and Daube, p.381.

matters with the other New Testament writers - the End of all things is at hand.[1] At the same time, he understands fully the paradox of the Christian life - "now" (ἀρτι) Christians believe on Jesus but do not see Him[2], they suffer persecution, yet still rejoice.[3] The Christian lives at the time when the Old Testament revelation is consummated[4], he belongs to God's people[5], and even now (νῦν) he is saved by Baptism.[6] In I Peter there is not the clarity and wider understanding of the issues involved in the Christian life which we find in Paul, the "auctor ad Hebraeos" and the Johannine writings; one feels that the writer moves more on the level of popular theology - if the letter was originally a baptismal homily as F. L. Cross has suggested[7], it would explain a great deal. The author does not formulate theologically the tension between present and future salvation which existed in the life of the early Church, but he bears valuable testimony to its existence on the level of the ordinary Church member.

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1. I Peter 4:7.
2. I Peter 1:8.
3. I Peter 1:6.
4. I Peter 1:12.
5. I Peter 2:10.
6. I Peter 3:21.
7. I Peter, a Paschal Liturgy, (London, 1954).

The Fourth Gospel is often interpreted as that book of the New Testament where eschatology has become fully "realized" to the exclusion of any real futuristic content. Yet surely, if our previous study has been correct in outline, the great Johannine formula ἔρχεται ὥρα καὶ νῦν ἐστιν [1] sums up perfectly the general eschatological teaching of the New Testament. Unfortunately, many exegetes have subsumed the first clause under the second, instead of giving full value to copula, and realizing that the Johannine intention is one of correlation and unification, rather than that of coalescence and subordination. Salvation to the Fourth Evangelist as to the other New Testament writers is both present and future - all who believe in Christ have eternal life, but Christ will still raise up the believer at the last day.[2] A future resurrection is still a necessity - Lazarus has already been raised up once, yet the Jews can still plot to kill him.[3] The rejector of Jesus will still be judged by the words of Jesus at the Last Day[4] - surely if this is not an echo of such a Synoptic saying as Mk. 8:38, there is hardly any significant difference in thought between them.

Certain scholars have noticed a difference between the

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1. John 5:25.
2. John 6:40.
3. John 12:10.
4. John 12:48.

eschatology of the Fourth Gospel and I John - and have even used this difference as one of the reasons for refusing to allow both works to have a common author. Admittedly there is a difference between the eschatology of I John 2:18 and that of the Fourth Gospel. The note of an imminent end in this verse is not found in the Fourth Gospel, nor is there in that work any reference to the signs which precede the end. Yet this difference of emphasis can easily be accounted for - the Gospel portrays a time before the ὥρα of Jesus had occurred, therefore as yet the question of the imminence of the End did not yet arise. The Epistle, however, was written to a situation arter the ὥρα - the End therefore could come at any time. It is our conclusion that thoroughgoing "realized" eschatology cannot be found by objective analysis of the thought of the Fourth Gospel. That Gospel is perhaps the most amenable for interpretation along such lines, but such a principle must nevertheless be imported from outside. Otherwise the Fourth Gospel shows no real variation from the general New Testament eschatological pattern.

If one had to list the three most significant books which have featured in the revival of interest in New Testament eschatology, there is little doubt that they would be Albert Schweitzer's Quest of the Historical Jesus, C. H. Dodd's The Parables of the Kingdom and Oscar Cullman's Christ and Time. The first book drew attention in a popular form to the presence of eschatological elements in the Gospels, the second has shown

how it was possible to interpret these elements in other terms than those of futuristic eschatology, while the last book has expounded what the author believes is the early Christian understanding of time. Few people will deny that the basic pre-suppositions concerning the nature of time in the minds of the earliest Christians were very similar to those described by Cullman, but a further question arises - do these concepts really constitute the New Testament understanding of time? Such a view may provide the raw material by means of concepts and words by which the New Testament writers express their understanding of the time-significance of the Christ-event, but are these concepts really adequate to what they are used to express? In view of the conclusions at which we have arrived in our previous discussion, we must answer these questions in the negative. The teaching of the New Testament as a whole concerning the Kingdom of God is that it is still to come, that it is still to receive its full manifestation, yet at the same time the Kingdom must be thought of as having entered into the experience of men, and to be active in the present. A simple "before" or "after" concerning the Kingdom of God is forever out of the question. It is here and it is yet still to come - the "naive-linear" view of time expounded by Cullman cannot really handle such a concept. Even the idea of the two αἰῶνες often used by the New Testament writers breaks down under the strain.[1] The

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1. Cf. the judgment of H. Sasse in T.W.N.T., Vol.1. "Der innere Widerspruch besteht darin, dass man in der Kategorie der Zeit zu denken versucht, was eigentlich im Gegensatz zur Zeit steht. Denn der gegenwartige αἰών verhalt sich zu dem zukunftigen wie die Zeit zur Ewigkeit." (p.205).

Kingdom of God, the "eschaton" in fact can scarcely be described in temporal terms at all; it has to do with time, it enters time, and yet though it is not bounded by time it acts within history. It is not transcendently aloof from the time-process, yet it is not limited by it. It is active within history, and yet in the end it will bring history to a close.

This ability of the "eschaton" to include within itself a unity of present and future, can be further exemplified by a brief glance at certain important eschatological words of the New Testament. Firstly, παρουσία : the primary sense of this word in the New Testament is to the future coming of Jesus Christ. Yet the very word itself is not solely orientated towards the future - it can equally well mean "presence" as well as "coming". This is shown very clearly in St. Paul's Epistle to the Philippians where he tells his readers that their boast may abound in Jesus Christ for him because τῆς ἐμῆς παρουσίας πάλιν πρὸς ὑμᾶς [1], while later he praises their obedience not only ἐν τῇ παρουσίᾳ μου but also in his absence.[2] Admittedly the term παρουσία is never applied in the New Testament to the historical mission of Jesus Christ, but there hardly seems any reason why it should not have been. The word ἐπιφάνεια is used in II Th. 2:8 as a pleonastic synonym for παρουσία ; in the Pastorals this word is again used

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1. Phil. 1:26.

2. Phil. 2:12.

not only for the return of Christ[1], but is also applied with equal ease to His first Coming.[2] A cognate verb to ἐπιφάνεια, φανερόω is even more interesting. This word which is the antonym of κρύπτω is in its passive form very closely connected with the "parousia" of Christ.[3] The Johannine writer goes on to say that not only is Christ to be manifested, but believers also.[4] To Paul, however, this manifestation both of the mystery hid from the ages[5] and the life of Jesus given to believers is taking place in the present.[6] Yet Paul can also say with John to believers that their life is hid with Christ in God, and that they will be manifested with Christ when He is manifested in glory.[7] It is thus hard to distinguish between this present and future manifestation of Christ and believers - Paul's language leads us to think of them as but two phases of the one basic activity. It is the same with other eschatological matters in the Apostle's thought as for example that of judgment. In the same letter, he can speak of men's deeds being judged at the last

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1. I. Tim. 6:14; II. Tim. 4:1, 8; Tit. 2:13.
2. II. Tim 1:10; cf. II Clem. 12:1; 17:4.
3. I. John 2:28.
4. I. John 3:2.
5. Col. 1:26.
6. II. Cor. 4:10.
7. Col. 3:4.

day[1], yet it is also accepted that an unbeliever may be judged and convicted if he attends a charismatic "service" of the Church.[2] The root ἀποκαλυπ- also reveals this tension - it generally refers to something which will happen in the future[3], yet Paul can say that he received the Gospel through ἀποκάλυψις Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ .[4] Does not this suggest that to Paul even his reception of the Gospel was a forereaching of the End?

This very brief study of certain New Testament eschatological key-words confirms to us what we had discovered in our review of the various New Testament writers' understanding of eschatology. The mighty act of God for men's salvation in Jesus Christ - incarnation, passion, resurrection, ascension and "parousia" was regarded as a unity. What would happen finally and fully at the last day was already happening now. The "parousia" would bring nothing new, it would only manifest finally the Kingdom of God, which since the first coming of Jesus Christ had been at work within history. In the life of the Church, in its worship the events of the Last Day were already being enacted - but as yet they were not even fully apparent to the worshippers themselves. The Church lived at the End - an End which as yet was not fully

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1. I. Cor. 3:13.

2. I. Cor. 14:25.

3. I. Cor. 1:7; II. Th. 1:7.

4. Gal. 1:12.

revealed to them, but present all the same. That was the mystery of the existence of the New Testament Church - and from that starting-point we shall seek to trace the development of eschatological thought within the Church till the time of Augustine.

II. From the Apostolic Fathers to Augustine

To trace the development in eschatological thought within the Church from the beginning of the second to the end of the fourth century is one of the hardest tasks within the field of historical theology. In the first place, the Fathers were very far from being systematic expounders of Christian doctrine; the first treatise which attempts to do this is the slight Epideixis of Irenaeus, then we have to wait for the De Principiis of Origen, and then even a longer period before we come to the Catechetical Lectures of Cyril of Jerusalem. What makes the matter even worse is that the question of eschatology was scarcely ever a matter of dispute during this period. Hippolytus attacked a certain Gaius whose zeal against the Montanists had overrun his discretion, for he had made aspersions about the canonicity of the Apocalypse and had attacked eschatological expectations in general; later on in the century, Dionysius of Alexandria found it necessary to rebuke a certain Bishop Nepos for his extreme chiliastic views, but that is about all.

It is not therefore surprising that there are few systematic references to eschatology in the writings of the Fathers - and this makes any argument e silentio hazardous in the extreme. It is true that the New Testament is an unsystematic work so that here also it is dangerous to argue e silentio, but one has only to go deeply into the thought of any chapter to see that it possesses an eschatological frame-of-reference. One of the

questions which we must ask at the end of this chapter is how far this is true with the later writers, and this is a question which cannot be answered by counting quotations, but by attempting to assess the atmosphere of a writer's work.

It is fitting to mention at this point the contention of Martin Werner that the chief problem which faced the early Church was that of the delay of the "parousia" - a fact which led to a total re-orientation and metamorphosis of the theology of the Christian Church. The counter-question, however, may justly be asked as to whether this was the great problem of post-apostolic Christianity. We find, indeed, a few references to this matter[1], but one would hardly suspect from these that this was the most pressing question of the age. One suspects that Werner was not led to this contention by the study of the second century Christian writers, but because he had already accepted Albert Schweitzer's account of the nature and development of New Testament Christianity. If the early Christians were just a group of people who expected the end of the world and the coming of the Son of Man to happen almost immediately - the non-occurence of this event would have been the most vital problem for the early Church. But as we have already seen, New Testament eschatology possessed a much richer content than that. The fact that the Early Church does not seem to have been weighed

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1. I Clem. 23. 3. p.22; II Pe. 3:4ff.

down by this problem suggests that there is something wrong with the Schweitzerian reconstruction of New Testament theology.

Nevertheless, there is still a residual problem to be taken into account; the earliest Christians did expect the "parousia" to take place within the lifetime of their own generation, why, when this did not occur, was there not sufficient spiritual unrest to find a place in the records which have come down to us? I wish to suggest three factors which may have prevented this problem from becoming of undue weight for the early Christians. These suggestions have no direct evidence to support them, and I can only mention them as having to my mind the stamp of historic probability.

In the first place, as we have seen earlier Jesus did not prophesy an immediate "parousia" - there was to be a certain delay between His death and His return in power. Now in Mk. 13 the most concentrated eschatological passage of the Gospels, the coming of the Son of Man seems to be placed after the fall of Jerusalem, which actually took place in A.D. 70. This fact that the Fall of Jerusalem had occurred forty years after the death of Jesus would have accustomed the Early Church to the idea that the "parousia" was still a matter of some years ahead.

Furthermore, there is to my mind an intrinsic probability in Bousset's suggestion of an esoteric apocalyptic doctrine which entered early into Christianity from Jewish sources though its origin was Iranian.[1] At any rate such views as that of the

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1. Cf. The Anti-Christ Legend, (E.T.), p.30.

six thousand years of world history corresponding to the six days of Creation seem rapidly to have gained wide acceptance within Christianity.[1] This entry of the element of calculation into Christian eschatology would tend to diminish any apprehension over the delay of the "parousia".

Finally, we must remember that all this time Christianity was entering more and more deeply into a Hellenistic milieu, where the basic Judaeo-Christian view of the significance of history and historical event was not only absent but a scandal. The doctrine of the "parousia" only becomes intelligible where history is accepted as meaningful, and therefore only comes under discussion among those who share this basic Judaeo-Christian premise concerning history. It was no use confronting the Hellenic world with the promise of the "parousia" - this would be to it just senseless prophesying. The Greek, however, could not so easily shrug off the life, death and resurrection of our Lord which the Christian could claim had happened. It was on this point therefore that the discussion raged. The attacks which were made on Christianity during the early centuries centred on the significance of the Christ-event, and it was on this point, the significance of the past, that the attention of the Church was concentrated.

The second century of the Christian era was a period of

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1. Barn. xv. 4. p.260; cf. II Pe. 3:8.

cosmopolitan theology, and as yet there was no real distinction between the types or theological thinking pursued in the Eastern and Western portions of the Mediterranean world. Furthermore, it was as a century unsystematic in its theological outlook; in fact the chief heretics of this period were those who attempted to promulgate a premature synthesis of the Christian revelation. Against the Gnostics, the Marcionites and the Montanists, the Church appealed back to its apostolic tradition - it must be true to the faith once for all committed to the saints - that was its supreme aim. As yet this tradition had taken no systematized form, and it is due perhaps more to this fact than any other that second century Christian theology possesses its formless character. Because of this it is scarcely possible to trace any continuous development in eschatological thinking from writer to writer in the second century, and therefore our aim will be just to show what themes are present in the thought of that period.

In the first place, eschatology is still orientated towards the future: ἐλθέτω χάρις καὶ παρελθέτω ὁ κόσμος οὗτος [1] is surely the most eschatological prayer possible. It is not to be thought that this high level of fervent expectation is maintained throughout the succeeding years, yet the sense of the nearness of the End is seldom far away. Ignatius tells the Ephesians that

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1. Did. x. 6. p.222.

they are living in the last times[1], while Barnabas though allowing an element of calculation to enter into his eschatology yet informs his readers that the Day is at hand.[2] A similar attitude is found also in Hermas, who though he believes that the tower representing the Church will have to be completed before the end can come, yet insists that the tower will be quickly completed.[3] Even Justin the urbane philosopher can call upon Trypho to repent straightaway for the end is imminent.[4]

The second century writers, however, see certain influences as at that time restraining the end. For Clement of Rome it is necessary for the Church to mature before the end can come,[5] while the same note is struck in the Didache in the prayer for the gathering of the Church[6], and as we have already seen Hermas believed it was necessary that the Church should be completed before the End. The writer of II Clement suggests on the other hand that the Kingdom will only come when Christians have reached a state of purity.[7] Again Justin suggests that the End is

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1. Ephesians xi. 1. p.108.
2. Barn. xxi. 3. p.265.
3. Vis. iii. 9. p.311.
4. Dial. 28. M.P.G. VI. c. 536.
5. I Clem. 23. p.18.
6. Did. ix. 4. p.311; cf. x. 5. pp.221f.
7. II Clem. xii. pp.48f.

delayed until all those whom God has foreknown will be saved actually repent[1], and on another occasion he stresses the necessity of the appearance of Antichrist berore the return of Christ.[2] In Tertullian, we find the even more surprising suggestion that the end is delayed by the existence of the Roman state, and that until that passes the woes of the End cannot begin.[3] This last suggestion reveals to us how radically the second century differed in its attitude to the delay of the "parousia" as compared with the New Testament church. The only restraining influence placed upon the end in the New Testament is that the Gospel must be preached to all nations.[4] Moreover, if we are to follow the extremely plausible exegesis of Cullman, τὸ κατέχον in II Thess. 2:6 refers to the message of the Gospel which is holding back the End.[5] Thus, in the New Testament view of the matter the only thing which restrains the End is the End under the form of the Gospel message. The End is conditioned only by the proclamation of the eschatological gospel. In the second century Church, however, this factor is surprisingly overlooked - the End is delayed by the need for the

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1. I. Apol. 28. M.P.G. VI. c. 372.
2. Dial. 32. M.P.G. VI. c. 543.
3. Apol. 32. I. c. 508f.
4. Mk. 13:10.
5. Christ and Time, pp.158-167.

Church to mature, for the Church to be completed, for Christians to become pure, for the foreknown to repent, for Antichrist to appear and finally even for the Roman state to pass away.

One detects here and there in the second century writers a sense that salvation still lies in the future. For the writer of II Clement ransoming seems to lie in the future[1], and in an earlier chapter we have noted how he seems to think of the Spirit as a future gift.[2] Justin speaks about Christ being kept in heaven until God has subdued His enemies the devils, though perhaps here Justin could claim the support of such New Testament passages as I Cor. 15:25.[3]

During the second century calculation of the time of the End began to play an important part in Christian eschatological thinking. How different this is from the New Testament can be seen by comparing Acts 1:7 with a passage in the "Epistle of the Apostles", a work originating in Asia Minor about 160, purporting to give the substance of conversations between the risen Christ and His disciples. On one occasion Jesus is asked how long it will be till the End, and replies that the Advent of His Father will take place after one hundred and fifty years during the time of Passover and of Pentecost.[4] The usual form

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1. II Clem. xvii. 4 and 5. p.52.
2. II Clem. xiv. p.50.
3. I Apol. 45. M.P.G. VI. c. 396.
4. Epist. Apost. 17. See translation in E. Staehelin, Die Verkündigung des Reiches Gottes in der Kirche Jesu Christ, Bd.1. (Basle, 1951), p.112.

of calculation, however, is that first found in Barnabas[1] which speaks of a thousand years of world-history for every day of creation. This scheme is fully accepted by Irenaeus[2], who argues further that the six hundred years of Noah's life before the Flood is a type of the six thousand years which has been allotted to unregenerate mankind.[3] Irenaeus also makes some interesting speculations on what will be the name of Antichrist, suggesting that it may be "Titan", but he goes on to enter a "caveat" that if it were necessary to be known to his own time, it would have been revealed to the writer of the Apocalypse.[4] We can only find one second century writer who definitely warns against the possibility of calculation - the author of II Clement[5], and as we have seen a scheme of calculation would hardly fit in with his contention that the end would not come till Christians had reached the requisite purity.

We have so far considered the futuristic elements in second century eschatological thought; we have now to consider how far they thought of their eschatology as "inaugurated". Ignatius in one passage seems to hold the two eschatological strands

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1. Barn. xv. 4. p.260.
2. Adv. Haer. V. xxviii. 3. M.P.G. VII. c. 1200.
3. Ibid. V. xxix. 2. M.P.G. VII. c. 1202f.
4. Ibid. V. xxx. 2, 3. M.P.G. VII. c. 1204ff.
5. II Clem. xii. 1. p.48.

together, when he calls upon his readers either to fear the wrath to come or love the grace which is present.[1] There is, however, very little language of this kind in the Christian writers of the second century. It is true that Hermas declares that one enters the Kingdom of God through the sacrament of baptism[2], but even this term had begun to lose its eschatological content, as Barnabas can speak of having to endure hard times within the Kingdom of God.[3] On the whole there seems in the second century little connection between the sacraments and eschatology, though Irenaeus can compare the resurrection of the flesh to the bread and wine in the Eucharist becoming the body and blood of Christ.[4] This, however, is rather a matter of analogy and does not really indicate any vital connection between the two happenings.[5] In this century also, there is the first clear distinction made between the first and second Advents of Christ[6], though such a distinction is already hinted in the

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1. Eph. xi. 1. p.108.

2. Sim. Herm. xvi. 2. p.386.

3. Barnabas VIII. 6. p.252.

4. Adv. Haer. V. ii. 2. M.P.G. VII. c.1124f.

5. G. W. H. Lampe in his essay "Patristic Eschatology" in Eschatology, p.23, suggests that there is a certain amount of "realized" eschatology found in certain homilies especially Melito of Sardis, but in our opinion these do not radically alter the second century situation as described above.

6. Justin I; Apol. liii. M.P.G. VI. c. 404ff.; Adv. Tryph. xxxii. M.P.G. VI. c. 544.

New Testament in Heb. 9:28. Nevertheless, the clear enunciation of the idea of two Comings of Christ does suggest that the New Testament idea of a single, integral, saving act of Christ had really disappeared from men's minds.

During the second century also, a subtle change of attitude towards the "parousia" seems to have come over the Christian Church. The passionate prayer quoted earlier from the Didache[1] is completely in line with the Marantha of the New Testament Church. Yet even as early as Ignatius, fear because of the coming wrath is entering into the Church's attitude towards the End.[2] By the time of II Clement this motive is gaining ground, and at the very beginning of his homily the hearers are warned of the necessity of thinking of Christ as the judge of the living and the dead.[3] It comes, however, completely to the forefront in Tertullian, who says that Christians pray for the upholding of the Roman Empire because they have no desire to be overtaken by the woes which must precede the end.[4] A Church which thinks like that can scarcely regard itself as being the "eschatological congregation". Nevertheless, to be fair to Tertullian, he does say in commenting on the second petition of

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1. Did. x. 6. p.222.
2. Eph. xi. 1. p.108.
3. II Clem. I. i. p.43.
4. Apol. 32. I. c. 508f.

the Lord's Prayer, that we must wish for the reign to be hastened, and for our slavery not to be drawn out.[1] The moralism which had entered the Christian faith during the second century had left its impress even upon its attitude towards the End. Because the Church did not live from the End as present, it began to look forward to the End as future with trepidation. The very fact of this fear of the End shows that the Church had lost its consciousness of being the "eschatological congregation".

Compared with the small part played by this symbol in the New Testament, it is surprising how much attention is paid to the Millenium by the writers of the second century. Probably the first extant reference to it is that of Papias which has been preserved to us in Eusebius' Ecclesiastical History[2], yet after this date it seems common to all the principal writers of the time. It is true that the Millenium is mentioned previous to Papias by Barnabas[3], yet he does not bring in to any real extent the picture of a restored earth which is generally associated with the Millenial idea. Justin accepts the idea, declaring that he not only believes in the resurrection of the dead, but also in

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1. De Oratio. v. I. c. 1261. Cf. the judgment of R. Frick on Tertullian "zwischen der Angst vor dem Gericht und der Sehnsucht nach dem Reich". Die Geschichte des Reich-Gottes-Gedankens in der alten Kirche bis zu Origenes und Augustin, (Giessen, 1928), p.69.

2. Eccl. Hist. Bk. III. xxxix. 11-13. G.C.S. (Eusebius II), p.290.

3. Barn. xv. p.260f.

a restored Jerusalem in the thousand years which will precede the general resurrection.[1] Irenaeus, while adopting the same basic idea, gives us far more details about that age, in no way spiritualizing its delights.[2] He even goes as far as to say that as in the Millenium the lion will feed upon straw, the wheat must be of superlative quality if lions can live upon the straw alone.[3] Likewise, Tertullian affirms his belief in the millenial kingdom upon earth, the New Jerusalem being let down from heaven, though he goes on to say that after the Millenium the earth will be destroyed, and our bodies changed to the same substance as that of the angels.[4] With his typical stress on the Divine justice, Tertullian goes on to argue that it is only fitting that the servants of God should receive their joy in the same place where they had previously suffered affliction.[5] Finally in Tertullian, we find the first attempts to take certain aspects of the Millenium in less than a strictly literal sense.[6]

Concerning this stress on the Millenium, two things need to be said. In the first place, such a belief, i.e. of futuristic chiliasm,cuts at the roots of any idea of "inaugurated" eschatology.

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1. Dial. 80, 81. M.P.G. c. 664ff.
2. Adv. Haer. V. xxxiii. M.P.G. VII. c. 1212ff.
3. Adv. Haer. V. xxxiii. 4. M.P.G. VII. c. 1215.
4. Adv. Marc. III. 24. II. c. 384ff.
5. Adv. Marc. III. 24. II. c. 385.
6. De Res. Carn. 26. II. c. 893; Adv. Jud. c. 7. II. c. 650.

If the gifts of the Messianic age are a thing of the future, from what does the Church live in the present? A purely future Millenium destroys the real Christian understanding of life between the times, and empties present Church history of all real eschatological content. As C. K. Barrett has well said, commenting on Barnabas' schematization of world-history:

> The notion of the Messianic Sabbath, which in several parts of the New Testament is a living conception, is stultified by Barnabas, who, failing to see that the Sabbath has dawned, forced the Christian view of history into the form of a time-table, thereby destroying its essential and characteristic paradox.[1]

On the other hand, belief in the Millenium is the great defence against the spiritualization of the Christian hope. It prevents any attempt to escape from or transcend history in favour of some spiritual realm. Temporal and historical existence does possess a consummation in its own right, and is not in the end just negated. Moreover, the cosmic aspects of the Millenial hope were a healthy counter-balance to a certain element of individualism which tended to creep into second century Christianity. Thus a belief in the Millenium tended at the same time to both preserve and empty the historico-eschatological attitude of the New Testament.

One element, however, in the history of second century Christianity has so far been left out of account - that of

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1. Barrett, op. cit., p.372.

Montanism. In this movement we meet the combined stress on imminent eschatology and the presence of the Holy Spirit in the life of the Church which is very reminiscent of New Testament Christianity. Yet orthodox Christianity, after at first much wavering, rejected Montanism entirely; why was this?

Earlier in this chapter, we maintained that "Tradition" was the watchword of orthodox Christianity in the second century, and it was just because of this tradition that Montanism was rejected. The stress on tradition in the Church really arose out of its consciousness of the decisiveness of what had been performed by Christ in the past. The Montanist claim that the utterances of the Spirit through its prophets could supersede that tradition, was really impugning the finality of what had occurred under Pontius Pilate. Because the Church knew that this decisive act had happened, it could not allow itself to relapse back into pure Apocalypticism, which would have been the result if it had capitulated to Montanism.

In summing-up the eschatological thought of the second century, we may draw attention to four main factors. Firstly, we may note the disappearance of a sense of "inaugurated" eschatology. The Church had a definite sense of the decisive importance of the historical Christ-event - hence its stress on apostolic tradition against all comers. It also possessed a lively faith in the return of Christ to sum-up all things in Himself (cf. Irenaeus). Where it failed was in that it possessed little idea

of how to connect these two events together, and relate them to the present life of the Church. It looked back and it looked forwards, but it did not live from its eschatology.

Secondly, the eschatology of the Church still preserved an historical content. The End would not negate human existence under earthly conditions, but fulfil it in a restored world. History and the world possessed a consummation not a negation at the End.

In the third place, an attitude of calculation in regard to the End had replaced that of New Testament watchfulness. This was again due to a failure in the Church's understanding of inaugurated eschatology - if the End was conditioned by factors other than itself, calculation was possible.

Perhaps, however, the chief facet of the second century's eschatology was its attitude to the New Testament revelation. It may not have really understood the New Testament, but it did adhere to its eschatological statements (even if misunderstood), and thus preserved them for a future generation. If the second century Church in its thinking often fell short of its forerunners, yet it did not interpret their witness away, but preserved it unsystematized for its successors. It had kept the eschatological hope alive, it had not compromised its apostolic deposit, even if it often failed to understand it.

At the beginning of the third century, however, this type of eschatological thinking began to receive its first thorough-

going challenge, primarily from the theologians of Alexandria. The first of these, Clement, made no attack on the traditional eschatological scheme, only he stressed certain elements which before had been neglected. The eschatology which he expounded was primarily "realized" and inward. He affirmed that the Christian attained perfection from his baptism, and that he was then already separated from death.[1] The resurrection is nothing more than the attaining of the promise already made, to which our attitude within time is one of faith, but the result of which will only be attained by us within eternity.[2] Faith in fact is the bridge between promise and fulfilment, by it we grasp by anticipation that which is future, though after the resurrection we shall receive it as present.[3] On occasion, this function of faith to bridge the gap between present and future is also attributed by Clement to love[4], but we must remember that he always affirmed that works were absolutely necessary if faith were to be efficacious.[5] In fact, Clement's continual stress is upon the inwardness of Christianity, and his eschatology is based on that understanding. He interprets Mt. 11:12 as meaning

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1. Paid. I. vi. 40, 41. M.P.G. VIII. c. 280ff.
2. Ibid. I. vi. 41. M.P.G. VIII. c. 284f.
3. Ibid. I. vi. 42. M.P.G. VIII. c. 285.
4. Strom. VI. ix. M.P.G. IX. c. 293.
5. Ibid. VI. 14. M.P.G. IX. c. 329.

that the Kingdom is gained by those whose lives are changed after their sins have been washed away.[1] Clement in fact stresses that part of New Testament teaching which was neglected on the whole by second century Christianity, but at the same time he overlooks the cosmic and historic elements in eschatology which were so much stressed by that century.

Of all the thinkers of the Early Church, Origen is the one concerning whom it is most difficult to discover what he really believed. He was an original thinker, and yet an official expounder of the Church's faith. His position as a philosophical thinker is witnessed to even by the pagan Porphyry, who regards him together with Erennius and Plotinus as one of the three chief disciples of Ammonius.[2] On the other hand as the head of the Catechetical School, he was obliged to expound the "depositio fidei" and the Scriptures. This resulted in the fact that it is often difficult to reconcile what Origen wrote in his most systematic work De Principiis with other statements of his. Yet furthermore, one suspects on occasion the conflict between the two realms of discourse in Origen's own mind does not lead to any clear solution either one way or the other. An example of this is to be found in his attitude to the body as set forth in De Principiis. He states in one place that the body, at least

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1. Strom. V. iii. M.P.G. IX. c. 33.

2. "On the Life of Plotinus" in The Enneads, trans. Mackenna, (2nd ed.), p.3.

insofar as it is material, is a form of punishment[1], yet on the other hand he equally affirms that life without a body is to be found within the Trinity alone[2], though in the end all bodies will be put aside.[3] It appears that it seems that he tries at the same time both to affirm and deny the importance of the body in the Christian scheme. In the same work, he argues that the end of all things is to be incorporeal[4], yet he goes on to affirm that there will be a spiritual body not only for the saints but for the whole of creation.[5] One feels that Origen's philosophical speculation is at times hampered by a sincerely felt adherence to tradition. It is almost impossible for Origen to reject a traditional Christian doctrine out of hand; he may criticize the form of it, but he generally manages to fit some of the content into his scheme somewhere or another. This is shown in his attitude to Chiliasm, which on occasion he attacks for the "materialism" of its pictures of a restored earth[6]; yet he still finds a place for this conception suggesting that as the saints depart from this life they will remain in some place situated on

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1. De. Princ. I. vii. 4. G.C.S. (Origen V.) p.90 (footnote).
2. Ibid. II. ii. 2. G.C.S. (Origen V.) p.112.
3. Ibid. II. iii. 3. G.C.S. (Origen V.) p.118.
4. Ibid. III. vi. 1. G.C.S. (Origen V.) p.281 (footnote).
5. Ibid. III. vi. 4. G.C.S. (Origen V.) p.285.
6. Ibid. II. xi. 2. G.C.S. (Origen V.) p.184f.

the earth called Paradise, where they will be taught about all that they have seen on earth, and prepared for what is to follow in the future.[1]

In his discussion of the petition "Thy Kingdom come" in his treatise on Prayer, Origen lays stress on the fact that the Kingdom does not come by observation, so that the person who prays for its coming, prays really that the Kingdom of God may increase in his own heart and bring forth fruit. He distinguishes between the Kingdom of God and that of Christ, the former being the mind's state of blessedness while the latter is those words which lead to the salvation of those that hear them and deeds of love.[2] Origen's spiritualistic individualism reveals itself in his tendency to deprecate interest in the End of the world, and he is the first theologian in the Church who argues that the hour of death is more important for the individual than the Last Day.[3]

In regards to the end of history, against Celsus Origen affirms that there must be an end to this world[4], but on the other hand he comes very near to the cyclical cosmology of Hellenism when he suggests that there were worlds before this

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1. De Princ. II. xi. 6. G.C.S. (Origen V.) p.190.
2. De Oratio xxv. 1. G.C.S. (Origen II.) p.357.
3. Serm. 56 on Mt. G.C.S. (Origen XI.) p.130.
4. Con. Celsum iv. 9. G.C.S. (Origen I.) p.280.

one, and that there will be further worlds after.[1] We find in Origen a radical hellenization of Christian doctrine, all the more dangerous because it is so carefully guised in the concepts and traditional language of the Church. One feels that in Origen, eschatology once more becomes cosmology as it was primarily for the Hellenistic world. In Origen, world-history just becomes a process, and it seems that he is lacking in a sense of God as living and righteous. This is seen in his attitude to future punishment; men are punished remedially, not by the personal wrath of God but by the fire which men create through their own sins.[2] It is remedial because it is just a part of a beneficent cosmic process, while retributive punishment does bear witness to a final moral eschatology over historical events. Origen's neglect of the simple supernatural futurism and chiliasm of the second century has really prevented him from understanding history in other terms than that of process.[3] Thus, in the last

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1. De Princ. III. v. 3. G.C.S. (Origen V.) p.273.

2. Con. Cel. iv. 72. G.C.S. (Origen I.) p.342; De Princ. II. x. 4. G.C.S. (Origen V.) p.177.

3. Cf. here the judgment on Origen of G. Florovsky: "In any case, history was for him, as it were, unproductive, and all that might be added to the pre-existent reality had to be simply omitted in the ultimate summing-up, as an accidental alloy or vain accretion. The fulness of Creation had been realized by the creative fiat 'in eternity' once for all. The process of history could have for him but a 'symbolic' meaning. It was more or less transparent for these eternal values." Texte und Untersuchungen 64 Papers Presented to the 2nd International Conference on Patristic Studies, Oxford, 1955, (Berlin, 1957), Pt.II, p.243.

resort, cosmic destiny is of no importance, and the prime attention is now fixed on the soul and its inward development.

It appears that Origen was both the head and so the most advanced representative of his own school of theology. None of his successors within the Church went further in the Hellenizing of eschatology than he did, and it is difficult to see how they could have done so without leaving the Church entirely. Nevertheless, the leaven which he had introduced into theology, particularly the theology of the Church in the Eastern part of the Mediterranean world, was continually at work. Later on in the same century, Bishop Dionysius of Alexandria attacked an Egyptian Bishop Nepos for holding materialistic and Jewish views concerning the Millenium. In the course of the attack, Dionysius impugned the apostolicity of the Apocalypse, though he suggests that the work has a possible symbolic meaning.[1]

The inward interpretation of the Kingdom of God as outlined by Origen is found also in Athanasius, especially in the Vita Antonii where the Kingdom of God seems to be equivalent to the "visio Dei". In one passage of this work βασιλεία and ἀρετή seem to be equivalent and interchangeable concepts.[2] On the other hand Origenism is far from being entirely dominant in Athanasius as a definite belief in the "parousia" is to be

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1. Eusebius, Eccl. Hist. VII. xxv. G.C.S. (Eusebius II.) p.692.

2. Vita Antonii c. 20 M.P.G. XXVI. c. 873.

found in his thought.[1]

In the Cappadocians also, there are plenty of traces of ideas which go back to Origen. Basil, even more strongly than Origen, insists on the necessity of liberation from the body in order that we may reach heaven.[2] The aim of the perfect Christian is flight from the world, which in a letter to Gregory of Nazianzus he declares to be not bodily separation from the world, but the cutting loose of the soul from its inner union with the body.[3] It appears that he regarded the world as the place in which we are trained by reason to see the invisible.[4] Chiliasm was for Basil an heresy to be attacked, which is shown in his relationship to Apollinaris who, besides his christological unorthodoxy, was perhaps the last firm upholder of Millenarianism in the East.[5] In Gregory Nazianzum too, we meet the idea of escaping from sense[6] and also the idea that it is our honour to gain the objects of our hope as the prize of our virtue and not merely as the gift of God[7] - even Pelagius could scarcely go further than this in

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1. De Incarnatione 56. M.P.G. XXV. c. 196.
2. Serm. Mart. Julitta c. 5 M.P.G. XXXI. c. 249.
3. Ep. II. M.P.G. XXXII. c. 223ff.
4. Serm. 6 Day Creation. I. 6. M.P.G. XXIX. c. 16.
5. Ep. 263, 265. Cf. discussion in Frick, op. cit., pp.111ff.
6. In Defence of his Flight 7. M.P.G. XXXV. c. 413f.
7. Ibid. 17. M.P.G. XXXV. c. 425.

libertarianism. Like Athanasius, he also seems to equate the Kingdom of God with the "visio Dei".[1] On the other hand, Gregory does not cut himself off entirely from traditional eschatology - he affirms that both soul and body will be united at the Resurrection in order to share the glory of heaven together, while he definitely looks forward to the end.[2] Gregory of Nyssa shares the general outlook of the Cappadocians on eschatological matters, though he makes one interesting suggestion concerning the resurrection - that as life before the Fall was angelic in nature, so will it return to this after the resurrection.[3]

On a more popular level the emphases of the Cappadocian fathers can be seen in the popular sermons of Chrysostom. He with them tends to look down upon Chiliasm, informing his hearers that God does not only promise them spiritual benefits but also earthly goods, so that people of the coarser sort might be attracted to the future.[4] Individualism comes to the fore and he tells his hearers that the end of life has for them the same meaning as the end of the world.[5] On the other hand, he can tell

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1. Oratio 20. M.P.G. XXXV. c. 1080; Poem. 24. M.P.G. XXXVII. c. 964.
2. Oration on Caesarius 21. M.P.G. XXXV. c. 784.
3. On the Making of Man xvii. M.P.G. XLIV. c. 188f.
4. 15th Serm. on Mt. c. 3. M.P.G. LVII. c. 226.
5. 10th Serm. on Mt. c. 5. M.P.G. LVII. c. 190.

his hearers on occasion that the End is near because the Gospel has been preached to all nations, the eschatological signs have been fulfilled, and these have been disregarded by the majority of people.[1]

In Chrysostom we perceive the diffused influence of Origen at a popular level. The traditional symbols of the Christian faith in eschatological matters are still accepted, but the cosmic, historic aspects of eschatology are toned down, the stress being placed on inwardness, and upon escape from the world of time and space into the eternal realm. It was in this manner that Origen had his main influence on Christian eschatological thought.

At the same time during these years the temporal position of the Church had undergone a radical change. What had previously been a frequently persecuted Church, whose main hope was fixed on the coming day of the Lord now found itself the only really recognized religious body in the Roman Empire. The question occurred to some as to whether its Chiliasm had not been after all one huge mistake. Perhaps the chief representative of this school was the church historian Eusebius. In his history, he criticizes Papias severely for writing about the millenial reign in a materialistic way, and because he took the apostolic language literally instead of symbolically.[2] For him eschatology

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1. 20th Serm. on Mt. c. 6. M.P.G. LVII. c. 294.

2. Eccl. Hist. III. xxxix. 12. G.C.S. (Eusebius II) p.290.

is practically fully realized in the reign of Constantine, yet even in the midst of his most fulsome language concerning Constantine, he insists that we must still await the change to a better world.[1] Nevertheless, if Eusebius still believes in heaven, the Christian Roman Empire represents for him the Millenium. This is shown by his exegesis on occasion - he refers "the saints of the Most High shall possess the Kingdom" to Constantine sharing his rule with his sons[2], though in his exegesis elsewhere he refers Dan. 7:13f. to our Lord.[3] The poet Prudentius also has this attitude towards the Roman Empire, and he goes as far as to address the Emperor Honorius as follows:

> viva tibi, princeps, debetur gloria vivum virtutio
> pretium decus immortale secuto. regnator mundi
> Christo sociabere in aevum, quo ductore meum trahis
> ad coelestia regnum.[4]

and he also makes the martyr Lawrence prophesy that Rome would fulfil under the Gospel the purpose of rule for which God has raised her up.[5] There may have been some excuse for Eusebius for his identification of the Kingdom of God with the Christianized Roman state, but Prudentius, after the dubious part played by the

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1. Oration on the Thirty Year Reign of Constantine x. G.C.S. (Eusebius I) p.223.
2. Ibid. iii. G.C.S. (Eusebius I) p.200.
3. Eccl. Hist. I. ii. 25/6. G.C.S. (Eusebius II) p.28.
4. C. Symmachum Bk. II. 755-8. LX. c. 240.
5. Peristephanon ii. 413-84. LX. c. 321ff.

Roman emperors in the Arian controversy ought to have known better. The result of this form of "realized" eschatology was the despair even among Christians after the fall of Rome in 410 which St. Augustine sought to counteract in his De Civitate Dei. This view was accepted in some form or another by many besides its more extreme representatives such as Eusebius and Prudentius - for example, Cyril of Jerusalem who deals on the whole quite traditionally with eschatology in Bk. xv. of his Catechetical Lectures, yet on occasion can write that the appearance of the luminous Cross to Constantine was the fulfilment of the sign of the Son of Man promised in Mt. 24:30.[1]

Yet in spite of these challenges from the Origenists and the Eusebians, the second century eschatological tradition was far from being dead, and in fact it remained, with certain developments, dominant in the West until the time of Augustine. Most of the elements of the second century eschatological tradition appear in Hippolytus at the beginning of the third. There is no doubt of the Biblicism of his approach, and one of his eschatological treatises On Christ and Antichrist is scarcely more than a catena of Biblical quotations. He is also a strong defender of tradition in regards to eschatology, and he points out the dangers of trusting to visions concerning the nearness of the "parousia".[2]

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1. Ep. ad Constantium 6. M.P.G. XXXIII. c. 1172f.

2. Com. Dan. 4.18,19. G.C.S. (Hippolytus I) pp.230ff.

In fact, he is extremely dubious concerning any idea that the End might come straightaway, as he is a firm believer in the necessity of the number of the foreknown being gathered into the Church before that event can occur.[1] This view was reinforced by the fact that he held firmly to the six thousand year scheme of world-history, and as he had calculated that Christ was born in the year 5500, there was still on his reckoning over two hundred years to go.[2] He opposed a certain Gaius, who in his zeal against Montanism had anticipated Tyconius in suggesting that the Millenium had started with the resurrection of Christ. However, in his answer Hippolytus also seems to have deviated from the Western tradition for he suggests that the Millenium should be equated with the Day of the Lord, quoting the text that a "thousand years shall be as one day".[3]

In Hippolytus, we find little about "inaugurated" eschatology, but later in the third century we find this "motif" occuring in Cyprian, even if it is in rather an unbiblical manner. He declares in one of his treatises that virgins have already begun to taste of the resurrection in this world[4], and in one of his letters he writes that confessors have already begun to rule.[5]

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1. Com. Dan. 4. 22. G.C.S. (Hippolytus I) p.240.
2. Ibid. 4. 23. G.C.S. (Hippolytus I) pp.242f.
3. Chapter against Gaius G.C.S. (Hippolytus I. 2) pp.246f.
4. De Hab. Virg. 22. (V. Cyprian III. 1.) p.203.
5. Ep. 76. 7. (V. Cyprian III. 2.) p.833.

The Kingdom of God is equated with immortality, and is promised to those who persevere.[1] Compared with earlier writers, Cyprian possesses a heightened sense of the nearness of the End, believing that all the signs which must precede that event had already been fulfilled.[2] Moreover, the Church has a place in his eschatology being regarded as the Kingdom in anticipation, and it is for this reason that no-one can attain unto the Kingdom who forsakes the Church.[3] It is not surprising that Cyprian makes schism one of the signs of the end.[4] Cyprian's eschatology also possessed its unity in Christ:

> ipse Christus esse regnum Dei quem venire cottidie cupimus, cuius adventus ut cito nobis repraesentetur optamus. Nam cum resurrectio ipse sit, quia in ipso resurgimus, sic et regnum Dei potest esse intellegi, quia in illo regnaturi sumus.[5]

We may say that Cyprian was the first writer since New Testament times who possessed a real sense of inaugurated eschatology, and who saw that it all cohered together in Christ. His attitude towards the Last Day is not one of calculation or fear, but

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1. De Hab. Virg. 21 (V. Cyprian III. 1) p.202.

2. De Unitate 16. (V. Cyprian III. 1) p.225.

3. Ibid. 14. (V. Cyprian III. 1) p.222.

4. Ibid. 16 (V. Cyprian III. 1) p.225.

5. De Dom. Oratio 13. (V. Cyprian III. 1) p.276. Origen is often accredited with calling our Lord αὐτο βασιλεία Cf. in Mt. XIV. 7. N.P.G. XIII. c. 1197 where his reference is primarily to the perfect rule of God in Christ's own life. Cyprian has a far deeper understanding of αὐτο βασιλεία - seeing in Christ the coherence of the Kingdom both present and future.

rather of eager expectancy.[1] The "martyr-situation" in which he lived had given to Cyprian a fuller understanding of the eschatological position of the Church, which had not been really seen by his predecessors. The heightened spiritual consciousness of the confessors had revealed to him the fact that the Kingdom was not only to come, but was already present in the Church.

Certain similarities to Cyprian are to be found also in the Commentary on the Apocalypse by Bishop Victorinus of Pettau, who was martyred in 304. Unlike Cyprian who did not take much interest in the Millenium, he described this in striking detail.[2] On the other hand he has a real sense of eschatology being "inaugurated" - the time of the End has begun with the Ascension of Jesus and with the outpouring of the Holy Spirit.[3] The never-closing gates of pearl are interpreted as the grace of God which also does not exclude.[4] Methodius and Lactantius, two contemporaries of Victorinus,add little to the Western eschatological tradition. Both adhere to the seven thousand year scheme for the duration of the world[5], and Lactantius in particular

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1. De Mortalitate 26. (V. Cyprian III. 1) p.314.
2. Com. Apoc. xix, xxi. 1-2. Cf. Staehelin, op. cit., pp.207f.
3. Ibid. vi. 1. quoted Frick, op. cit., p.129 n.4.
4. Ibid. xxi. 6. Cf. Staehelin, op. cit., p.208.
5. Convivium ix. 1. M.P.G. XVIII. c. 177; Inst. vii. 14. VI. c. 781.

seems to adhere to a calculation similar to that of Hippolytus which gave the world two hundred years further to run.[1] Both stress the glory of the renewed world in the Millenium[2], Methodius in particular emphasizing that it is the pattern of this world which will pass away not the world itself.[3] He further says that while we are in this world we only have a partial knowledge, because as yet the perfect, i.e. the kingdom of heaven and the resurrection, has not yet come to us.[4] In Lactantius' thought there is far more apocalypticism - he insists that wickedness must increase before the end can come, and that Roman rule by preventing this lawlessness is really delaying the end.[5] No noticeable advance in eschatological thinking can be found in these writers, and they appear to be lacking in the particular insights concerning "inaugurated" eschatology which Cyprian possessed.

The greatest figure strictly within the early Western Christian tradition is St. Ambrose, and he, even more than Augustine, was content to view that tradition in the light of the Scriptures. In him we find the early Western eschatological

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1. Inst. vii. 25. VI. c. 812.
2. Inst. vii. 24. VI. c. 808ff.
3. De Res. M.P.G. XVIII. c. 276.
4. Conviv. ix. 2. M.P.G. XVIII. c. 180f.
5. Inst. vii. 15. VI. c. 787f.

tradition at its fullest and its best. In one sense his view of the "eschaton" is fully futuristic - he declares that the Phoenix has its resurrection in this world, but we have ours at the end of the world.[1] He possessed also a deep understanding of the significance of the resurrection for the natural world, so that what has been lost because of sin is perpetuated by the resurrection.[2] There is still a trace of apocalypticism in his thought, as in his belief that the Antichrist must come from the tribe of Dan[3], but he is against calculation of the date of the "parousia" because it is to our advantage not to know this so that we may always watch.[4]

On the other hand, Ambrose possesses a strong sense of "inaugurated" eschatology. To him the Kingdom of God is two-fold - we receive firstly in the forgiveness of our sins in baptism and secondly after the resurrection when we are with Christ.[5] The End is already at work in the present, so he can say "adest itaque iudicii dies".[6] However, there is also a place in his thought for the Origenic idea of Purgatory and he

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1. Death of Satyrus II. 59. XVI. c. 1389.
2. De Bono Mortis 15. XIV. c. 574.
3. En. Ps. 40. 25. XIV. c. 1131.
4. De Fide Christiana v. 210. XVI. c. 720.
5. Luc. v. 61. XV. c. 1738.
6. Luc. viii. 39. XV. c. 1867.

maintained that all Christians, even the good ones will eventually have to be tested and purged by fire.[1] As we have seen previously in our treatment of the development of baptismal doctrine, Ambrose was the most Biblical of the representatives of the early Western Christian tradition, and we can see also here that he endeavours to do justice to both the futuristic and inaugurated trends in Christian eschatology. At the same time, we must also admit that he is not thoroughgoing in this; there is not as there is to the New Testament an eschatological basis to his theology - and above all he did not belong to a Church which thought of itself as the "eschatological congregation" as did the New Testament Church. Thus, though Ambrose attempts to do justice to both poles of eschatological thought, the unity between them is not to him creative and vital, and therefore does not permeate and unify his theology.

In Jerome, the great exegete and contemporary of Augustine, we perceive an aversion from a too literalistically-conceived Chiliasm. In a letter to Hedybia, the notion that Christ will eat bread and drink wine with the faithful on earth for a thousand years is called a fable.[2] In his commentary on Isaiah, he states that if anyone took the details of 11:6ff. literally, he would regard it as Judaizing[3], while in the foreword to Bk. 18 of

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1. En. Ps. 36. 26. XIV. c. 1027.

2. Ep. 120. 2. XXII. c. 980.

3. Com. Is. 11. 6. XXIV. c. 147.

this commentary which deals with chapters 65 and 66 of the prophecy, he argues that millenial imagery is to be taken spiritually.[1] At the same time Jerome was not lacking in eschatological expectancy, and he saw in the barbarian invasions signs of the rapidly approaching End.[2] There is, however, an approach in his thought towards "inaugurated" eschatology, when he declares that we must hold as fulfilled whatever is declared in the Old Testament as having to happen in regard to Christ.[3]

The last person we shall glance upon in our survey is Tyconius, the Donatist, whose thought had such a great influence upon Augustine. He divided world-history into four periods: that of natural law (from Creation till Moses), that of Law, the time of the appearance of Christ, and finally the Millenium which was inaugurated by Christ's resurrection. Baptism is in fact the first resurrection, while the binding of Satan means that the devil is restrained in the hearts of the wicked. The thousand years of the Millenium is only a parable representing a period of time in contrast to Eternity, and Tyconius in fact seems to have expected the End in the near future.[4] Tyconius, I believe, we can say marks a new departure in Christian eschatological

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1. Com. Is. Bk. 18. foreword. XXIV. c. 627ff.
2. Ep. 123. 16. XXII. c. 1057f.
3. Com. on Jer. foreword to Bk.VI. XXIV. c. 865.
4. For Tyconius cf. Frick, op. cit., pp.132f.

thought, and his view can be more satisfactorily discussed when we come to consider Augustine.

In concluding our survey of the eschatological thought of the early Western Church, we must rirst note that there is little formal departure from the various elements in the Biblical eschatological picture - even if the unity of that picture is rarely attained to. The first serious attack on Chiliasm in the West came from Jerome, and we must remember that he was to quite a large extent influenced by the thought of Eastern Christendom, with his interest in Origen in his youth and the sojourn in Bethlehem in his later years. Yet, in spite of its faithfulness to the letter of the Bible, the Western Church did not recover the eschatological consciousness of New Testament times. On occasion, we do find in its writers sentences which seem to reflect this attitude, but it would be dangerous to build too large an edifice upon these. It is very similar to the assertion that all the principle ethical sayings of Jesus can be found paralleled in Rabbinic literature. That may be true, but one is constrained to ask - and how much besides as well? So it is with the eschatological sayings in the Fathers; the decisive thing about New Testament eschatology is not the number of references to it in that book, but its all-pervading nature, colouring every other concept within the ken or the Early Church. It is just this all-pervading character that the eschatology of the Fathers lacks. With them eschatology had taken the first

step to becoming almost an appendix at the end of a textbook on Dogmatics.

It is noteworthy that the two writers who approach perhaps closest to the New Testament eschatological faith, Cyprian and Victorinus, lived in times of violent persecution. Only then does the New Testament unity of eschatological consciousness seem to have been rekindled in their experience. But what destroyed this unity of consciousness in the first place - it is hard to say, only the present writer suspects that it was intimately connected with the moralism which seems to have firmly entrenched itself within the Christian Church at least by the time of the Apostolic Fathers.[1] After this moralistic element had gained a foothold within Christianity, the unity of eschatological consciousness seems to have disappeared completely - afterwards we have stresses on the cosmic, futuristic elements in eschatology, and also on the individual "inaugurated" elements - but the sense of the Church as the "eschatological congregation" seems totally to have disappeared. In my opinion, one of the most valuable tasks which could be undertaken in the field of Church history is an investigation as to how the moralistic element became dominant in the Early Church.

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1. Cf. for this, T. F. Torrance, The Doctrine of Grace in the Apostolic Fathers, and for a basically similar judgment by a writer of a very different view point, K. E. Kirk, The Vision of God, (London, 1931), pp.130ff.

We have seen how in the West a rather literal adherence to the Bible had prevented any real acceptance of Origenist individualism and its attendent flight from history. The manifoldness of the Biblical witness had been preserved, and in the more Biblical theologians like Ambrose even a sense of anticipated eschatology in the life of the Church had been recovered. Yet Ambrose was in a position somewhat analogous to that of the modern preacher, who knows something of the New Testament eschatological unity of consciousness at second hand, yet cannot arouse a similar consciousness within himself or in his congregation.

Perhaps, however, the most important result of this development for our study was that in the West there was no generally accepted pattern of eschatological interpretation, especially as the old Chiliastic interpretation was beginning to lose its power and popularity. It was in this very pressing and open situation that Augustine faced the problem of how in his theology he should remember the last things.

Chapter VII.

Eschatology and Platonism in St. Augustine

Our previous chapter has shown us that in the time of St. Augustine the Western Church had practically lost any unified understanding of the Last Things. Furthermore, there was no dominant interpretation of Christian eschatology current which was able to command the allegiance of the majority of Christian thinkers at that time. The cosmic and chiliastic elements which had been dominant during the early development of Western Christian eschatology had gradually been losing their power to sway the thinking of the theologians of the Church. In their place, stress was being increasingly laid on the eschatological importance of the hour of death as being determinative of the individual's destiny. A contrary tendency to this was to regard either the Church or even the now Christian Roman Empire as being in a very real way manifestations of the Kingdom of God. On the other hand, the Church does not seem to have possessed any clearly defined place in the working-out of the Last Things - and any consciousness of the Church as the "eschatological congregation" - the body of people called out to await and witness to the imminent End of history, in whose fellowship the powers of the End were already at work, seems to have disappeared completely. At the same time, the individual components of the Christian hope as presented in the Scriptures had not been denied, though their inherent unity was scarcely grasped by the Church at that time. It was only in this - in the necessity of doing justice to the various facets of the eschatological witness in the Bible that

St. Augustine was limited in his teaching on this matter.

In his teaching on the Last Things, St. Augustine does ample justice to the futuristic element in the Christian hope, and for him the second Advent of Christ is a necessary result of His first Coming.[1] This second Advent is necessary, together with the attendant resurrection of the dead, in order that the work of salvation might be completed; until the Resurrection even the martyrs only receive "parva particula promissionis".[2] Augustine, however, refuses to calculate the time of the end, and he shows no particular love for the various manipulations of the six thousand year world scheme so frequent in the earlier centuries of Christian history. His attitude towards all calculations is one of complete caution: "magis eligo cautam ignorantiam confiteri, quam falsam scientiam profiteri".[3] At the same time, Augustine openly admits that there must be certain signs before the End comes.[4] Before Christ returns there must be the advent of Elijah[5], the Jews as a nation must also accept the Christian faith[6], while there must also take place the great final persecution by Antichrist.[7] Then there are two seemingly

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1. Ep. 199. 41. XXXIII. c. 920; En. in Ps. 95. 14. XXXVII. c. 1235.
2. Serm. 280. 5. XXXVIII. c. 1283.
3. Ep. 197. 5. XXXIII. c. 901.
4. Ep. 199. 38. XXXIII. c. 919.
5. Trac. Ioan. 4. 5. XXXV. c. 1408.
6. Ep. 149. 19. XXXIII. c. 638.
7. De Civ. Dei xx. 19. XLI. c. 685ff.

contradictory signs; in the first place the Gospel must be preached and the Church spread among all nations[1], while on the other hand there will be a great apostasy before the End comes.[2]

Augustine, however, does not only look at the Second Advent of our Lord as the perfection of the work of salvation, rather he lays stress on the future work of Christ as judge.[3] When Christ comes again, He comes to judge, just as in His first Advent He came to be judged[4]; even Christians after this life will have to be judged[5], and before that judgment even the righteous will tremble.[6] It appears that the theme of the testing of the individual Christian in the judgment plays quite a large part in Augustine's thinking about individual eschatology.[7] As we should tend to expect, together with this stress on the future judgment, there develops an individualistic strain in Augustinian eschatology, and we meet the idea in his writings that

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1. Ep. 199. 46-51. XXXIII. c. 923f.

2. Ep. 199. 22. XXXIII. c. 913.

3. Cf. H. Eger, "Stärker als die Theologie vor ihm hat Augustine mit der Formulierung des Symbols ernst gemacht, indem er von dem kommenden Richter spricht", Die Eschatologie Augustins (Greifswalder Theologische Forschungen 1), Greifswald, 1933, p.41.

4. Trac. Ioan. 19. 16. XXXV. c. 1553.

5. De Fid. et Op. 29. XL. c. 217.

6. Sermo 93. 13. XXXVIII. c. 578.

7. En. in Ps. 6. 3. XXXVI. c. 91.

the death of the individual is the personal equivalent of the Last Day.[1] In Augustinian thought, the individual rather than the cosmic elements in the Last Judgment become central.

Besides these futuristic elements in Augustine's teaching on the Last Things, there are also considerable elements of "realized" eschatology in his thought. In discussing the meaning of apocalyptic language in the New Testament, Augustine states that we must be careful to distinguish in our interpretation between three things - those sayings which refer to the fall of the earthly Jerusalem, those which refer to Christ's coming in His Body the Church, and those again which refer to His final Coming at the Last Day.[2] Unfortunately, Augustine never attempts to describe in any full manner, how Christ comes gradually to His Church except to state that this Coming is through the preaching of the Gospel.[3] It does, however, say a great deal for Augustine's exegetical perspicuity that he is able to see in apocalyptic language these three distinct terms of reference. Corresponding to this double Coming of Christ, within the Church and at the end of history, there is the twofold nature of God's judgment, which is both hidden within history and also to be manifest at the Last Day.[4] Three forms of Judgment are recognized

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1. Ep. 199. 2. XXXIII. c. 905.

2. Ep. 199. 26. XXXIII. c. 914.

3. En. in Ps. 95. 14. XXXVII. c. 1235.

4. En. in Ps. 9. 1. XXXVI. c. 117.

by Augustine; the judgments at the beginning of both cosmic and human history when the fallen angels and man were condemned corporately, the judgment on individuals which takes place during the course of history, and the final open judgment of the Last Day.[1] Yet, when we have drawn attention to his recognition by Augustine of the double nature of Christ's Advent, and the dual aspects of the Divine judgment, we are still never given any indication how these present and future facets of the Divine activity are connected with one another. Once again we meet with evidence that Augustine did not possess a unified eschatological outlook.

In one matter in particular, however, Augustine did interpret an element of the eschatological complex which formerly had been held to lie in the future as "realized" - the doctrine of the Millenium. At first, Augustine held to the traditional Western teaching on this matter, expecting a thousand year reign of the saints on earth, though he depicted their blessedness in more spiritual terms than some previous commentators on this theme.[2] In the De Civitate Dei, Augustine has placed on one side all such interpretations; the Millenium can be interpreted in either of two ways - it can represent what happens in the sixth thousand-year period of world history, or it can stand as symbol for

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1. De Civ. Dei xx. 1. XLI. c. 659; De Civ. Dei xx. 5. XLI. c. 662ff.

2. Sermo. 259. 2. XXXVIII. c. 1197f.

human history considered as a whole.[1] In conformity with this position which he has adopted, Augustine differentiates radically between the two resurrections - the first is of the soul and takes place when sins are forgiven in baptism, while the second or general resurrection takes place at the Last Day.[2] Thus in a very real sense, the resurrection has taken place for the Church but only spiritually - the physical resurrection has yet to come. Here we find a parallel to Augustine's teaching on Divine judgment - as the present judgment is hidden only to be revealed at the Last Day, so is also the resurrection of the Church. It is in this sense that we must interpret Augustine's declaration that the Church is already the Kingdom of God.[3] In a way that is still hidden the Church does reign with Christ, even though out of this Church the tares will only be finally gathered at the Last Day. The Church as it appears in history can be described as the place where still Jacob and Esau contend[4], yet viewed eschatologically it is even now the Kingdom of God. The fact that the Church is the Kingdom of God is really a mystery, which can only be resolved by the recognition that it is the

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1. De Civ. Dei xx. 8. XLI. c. 670.

2. Ibid. xx. 6. XLI. c. 666; cf. Trac. Ioan. 19. 16. XXXV. c. 1553; Sermo 127. 7. XXXVIII. c. 709.

3. De Civ. Dei xx. 9. XLI. c. 673.

4. En. in Ps. 126. 8. XXXVII. c. 1673.

elect within the Church who constitute the Kingdom proper. Men can receive forgiveness of sins in baptism, they can partake of the Eucharist, and even proclaim the Gospel, yet some belong to the Kingdom while others do not.[1] The mystery of the hidden number of the elect in the Church is just another way of stating the present mystery of the Church as the Kingdom of God. Once again we perceive that in Augustinian thought there is not a perfect communicatio idiomatum between the Church and the heavenly realities with which it is united. This imperfect communicatio is the root tension in Augustinian thought.

It would be injust to accuse Augustine of conceiving of the Kingdom of God in a debased sense, as for example did Barnabas, who could speak of having to endure good and evil times within the Kingdom of God.[2] The Kingdom is perfectly and truly present in the Church, only its presence is hidden. The charge which can be made, however, against Augustine's re-interpretation of the Millenial hope is that it fails to take history seriously by depriving it of a fulfilment. In Augustinian thought, the Millenium becomes the symbol of the flux of history in which the wandering people of God are involved, scarcely possessing any specific time content of its own whether we measure time in terms of "chronos" or of "kairos". No achievement in history is more

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1. Ep. 127. 7. XXXIII. c. 486.

2. Barn. viii. 6. p.252.

than ambiguous even to the believer - he cannot even be sure of his own salvation. We may ask whether the temptation will not be to take refuge in an other-worldly mysticism, in which the believer tries to raise himself above the flux of temporal activity. Besides the temporal eschatology bequeathed to Augustine by the Scriptures and tradition of the Church, did he also possess a non-temporal eschatology provided by mystical experience?

Within the limits of this chapter, we cannot do more than trace in the barest outline the nature of Augustinian spirituality, depending to a very great extent on the works of Butler and Burnaby.[1] At first sight, there might appear to be some justification for our previous suspicion for the spirituality of Augustine is primarily intellectual.[2] Augustine distinguished between three types of vision: corporeal, spiritual and intellectual. The first type of vision was that of ordinary physical objects, the second form of vision was that of mental images, while intellectual vision dispensed with all images and

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1. Dom. C. Butler, Western Mysticism (London, 1922).
J. Burnaby, Amor Dei (London, 1938).

2. "Western mystics commonly represent contemplation as attained to by and in absorption in prayer; but for Augustine it seems to have been primarily an intellectual process - informed, indeed, by intense religious warmth, but still primarily intellectual." Butler, op. cit., p.46.

regarded things according to their eternal incorporeal essence.[1] Intellectual vision was the highest type of vision, and in order to obtain it, one had to abstract all sensible particulars from created things in order to view them in their eternal essence.[2] Augustine describes the nature of this spiritual ascent, starting from the sensible particulars of corporeal objects, then passing to the faculties of the mind which receive these sense impressions, then to the reasoning power of the mind, and finally leaving all the sensible images presented by the mind there comes "in ictu trepidantis aspectus" the vision of the ultimate intelligible "invisibilia".[3] One suspects that in this matter, Augustine is not just speaking from theory, but had actually undergone such an experience.[4]

It appears that such a vision could offer for the mystic a form of "realized" eschatology, yet even as early as De Vera Religione, Augustine has realized that such a vision is really insufficient, and that in this life we must be content to know only in part.[5] One of his most common criticisms in the Retractiones is that in his early works, he had claimed that a

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1. De Gen. ad Lit. xii. 15, 16. XXXIV. c. 458f.
2. En. in Ps. 41. 7-9. XXXVI. c. 467ff.
3. Conf. vii. 23. XXXII. c. 745.
4. Cf. quotations given by Burnaby, op. cit., pp.33f.
5. De Vera Religione 103. XXXIV. c. 167f.

perfect vision of God was possible in this life.[1] The "visio Dei" the highest point of Augustinian "desire"[2] would only be achieved perfectly in the life to come. It was possible for the believer to take the first steps in the contemplative life in this world, but its fruition was only possible in the world to come.[3] In one passage he compares the active and contemplative lives to Leah and Rachel, the two wives of Jacob, arguing that in this world both must be accepted and lived.[4] On another occasion he compares the two lives to Martha and Mary, and while admitting that the future belongs to the contemplative life of Mary, he is equally emphatic in stressing that all believers must live Martha's life in this world.[5]

This evidence suggests that Augustine never permitted mystical experience to become for him a form of "realized" eschatology in which the adept partakes of the eternal world regardless of his temporal position within salvation-history. Even when he is most sanguine concerning the possibility of this intellectual vision of the intelligible world, there enters into his discourse some traditional element of the Church's

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1. Retrac. I. 2. XXXII. c. 558; I. 7. c. 593; I. 14. c. 606.
2. Ench. I. v. XL. c. 233.
3. Trac. Ioan. 124. 5. XXXV. c. 1974.
4. C. Faustum xxii. 52-58. XLII. c. 432-7.
5. Sermo 104. 4. XXXVIII. c. 617f.

eschatological faith.[1] Not only does Augustine reject the idea that perfect contemplative vision is possible in this life, but in his mature works he takes the same attitude to ethical achievement. In his exposition of the Sermon on the Mount, he speaks of those who having brought their emotions perfectly under control of reason become the Kingdom of God, and live a perfect life of wisdom upon earth.[2] Later, however, in the Retractiones he censures this view and declares that such perfection is not possible in this life.[3] We can see in the development of Augustinian spirituality an increasing eschatological tension. In some of the early works, one has the impression that the principal tension in Augustinian spirituality is between "here" and "yonder" - the intelligible world. In his mature thought, however, the tension rather becomes one between "here" and "hereafter", and there enters into Augustine's writings a more ready acceptance of the incompleteness of earthly experience and a more thoroughgoing denial of the possibility of transcending this within the present life.[4]

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1. De Quantitate Animae 76. XXXII. c. 1077. Cf. the judgment of Burnaby, op. cit., p.63: "The 'De Quantitate Animae', for example, has no doubt had immense influence upon later thought and experience; but in Augustine's religious development it represents an immaturity soon outgrown, and it ought not to be quoted in illustration of the characteristically Augustinian positions."

2. De Serm. Dom. in Monte 1. 9. XXXIV. c. 1233.

3. Retrac. I. 19. XXXII. c. 614.

4. Cf. on this point Burnaby, op. cit., pp.52f.

It thus appears that the mature Augustine decisively rejected the "realized eschatology" offered by his early intellectual spirituality. In its roots this early spirituality was primarily Plotinian - and as such was in its nature an essentially individual type of piety. In the thought of Plotinus the soul of the individual and the world-soul are basically the same in nature[1], and therefore the need for a corporate piety does not arise. We have noted previously the strongly intellectualistic nature of Augustinian piety, and here again we find close affinities with that of Plotinus. In the Plotinian scheme there is no radical separation between the emanations, but rather a mutual co-inherence, especially between the ψυχή and the νοῦς .[2] Because of this it is always possible for the ψυχή to be both "here" and "yonder".[3] Thus conversion in Plotinus is primarily an intellectual return; the ψυχή accepts itself as such and recognizes its participation in and dependence upon the νοῦς , and so overcomes by reason its irrational desire towards matter.[4] In such a conversion the time-element and the subsequent tension between "here" and "hereafter" is quite irrelevant as both νοῦς and ψυχή are co-eternal hypostases. There is no "grace" in

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1. Ennead. III. i. 8.
2. Ibid. IV. iv. 9.
3. Ibid. IV. iii. 12; IV. iii. 11.
4. Ibid. IV. iii. 13.

the spirituality of Plotinus, to whom any idea that the νοῦς , the manifold intelligible principles of all existence could descend into the realm of ψυχή to assist its return would have been incomprehensible nonsense.

It is, however, just on this very point that Augustinian piety so radically differs from that of Plotinus. Conversion to Augustine is not just a matter of intellectual ascent, of the soul coming to itself and recognizing its participation in the νοῦς . Rather for Augustine the incarnate work of Jesus Christ has made all the difference; whatever ascent the Christian soul may make into the eternal world, it is first of all dependent upon the historical descent of the Word. Augustine confesses that the reason why he could not at first come to the knowledge of God was that he was not humble enough to accept the Incarnate Mediator Who had come to man in humility in order to raise the humble.[1] However intellectual may have been the early piety of Augustine, its basis was essentially different from that of Plotinus. Augustine realized that he had not come to a knowledge of God through any failure in intellectual perspicuity or lack of ability to abstract his mind from sensible experience, but because he was not humble enough to accept the Word Incarnate. Thus in the last resort the conversion of Augustine was moral rather than intellectual; its root was acceptance

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1. Conf. VII. 18. XXXII. c. 745.

rather than ascent, and it was brought about by a specific act of God in time.[1] It is because of this last point that Augustine later severely censures people who seek purification from this present world, and yet refuse to put their trust in the saving facts of history. While we are in this world, historical events are all-important for us, because we walk now by faith and not by sight.[2] It was one of the principal dicta of Augustine that in this world we must walk by faith, and that "sight" would only be granted to us in the world to come.[3] For him, faith was not just a matter of "fiducia" but the acceptance on authority of the saving events upon which the Christian faith is founded. We can see then that this stress on the necessity of faith during our earthly pilgrimage preserved the historical and eschatological nature of Augustinian piety.

We have still to ask, however, whether Augustinian piety was completely orientated around the eschatological Christ-event. True, for his own personal piety the coming of Christ in humility

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1. Note here the judgment of J. Guitton, Le Temps et l'Éternité chez Plotin et Saint Augustin (Paris, 1933), p.100: "Si le lien des thèses de Plotin se trouve dans l'idée d'une conversion mentale, à laquelle (par une savante confusion du temps et de l'éternité) et donne une valeur creatrice et salvatrice - la source des doctrines augustiniennes est à chercher dans une experience intérieuree et historique de conversion morale (qui lui rappelle la distance infinie de l'éternité et de la durée en même temps que leur inhérence)."

2. De Trin. IV. 24. XLII. c. 904.

3. Exp. Ep. ad Gal. 3, 28, 9. XXXV. c. 2125.

was of the utmost importance, but this piety as yet was not clearly connected with the Church and the sacraments, in which this event was prolonged. At times Augustine reveals a deeply-moving "mystique" concerning the sacraments[1], yet one finds it extremely difficult to connect this "mystique" logically with the rest of Augustine's outlook. One is tempted to compare it with Augustine's attitude towards baptism - baptism is all-important for salvation, yet it is hard for him to give any clear description of what it performs by itself. Though Augustinian spirituality is basically Christian in being centred on the Christ-event, there are still traces within it, especially in regards to its individualism, of Neo-Platonic piety also.[2]

This tension and fusion of Neo-Platonic and Christocentric elements is not only true of Augustinian piety, it pervades the whole of Augustinian thought. As Dom.Cuthbert Butler has well said:

> After his full conversion to Catholic Christianity his Platonism continued ineradicably, and he used the thoughts and language of Plato's philosophy as interpreted by the Neo-Platonic school, as the vehicle for the formulation and expression of Christian truth and theology, just as naturally and whole-heartedly as did St. Thomas use those of Aristotle.[3]

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1. Sermo 272. XXXVIII. c. 1246f.

2. This tension between individual and Churchly elements in Augustinian piety is well illustrated in En. in Ps. 41. 9. XXXVI. c. 469f., where Augustine distinguishes between the "tabernacle" (the Church of the faithful) and the House of God. In order to reach the latter place, one must enter the "tabernacle" but it is equally necessary to pass on beyond it.

3. Butler, op. cit., pp.86f.

To say, however, that Augustine just used Platonic forms in order to express the substance of his Christian faith is a far too simple solution of this problem, as form and content can never be so clearly distinguished in such an easy manner. The interaction of the two elements of Neo-Platonism and Biblicism in Augustinian thought is intricate in the extreme, and their tracing in the various aspects of his teaching one of the most fascinating parts of Augustinian scholarship.[1] Though on occasion these two elements almost approached open conflict with each other, neither succeeded in expelling the other entirely. In this study, we can only touch on one aspect of this problem - the relationship between Biblicism and Neo-Platonism in the Augustinian understanding of time and eternity as affecting the doctrines of creation and redemption.

Eternity for Plotinus is the complete antithesis of time; it can know no change, permit no development and as all its content is in immediate concentration as at one point, it can know of no measure.[2] It belongs essentially to the sphere of τὸ ἕν and the νοῦς. Time also lay at rest within the νοῦς but then it was not yet time, as it only comes into existence when

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1. We have found the following studies especially interesting in regard to this problem: Burnaby, op. cit.; Guitton, op. cit.; and J. Barion, Plotin und Augustinus (Berlin, 1935).

2. Enn. I. v. 7; III. vii. 3.

the All-Soul seeks to realize itself.[1] This seems at first very reminiscent of the Augustinian doctrine that time only came into existence with creation, but we must remember that for Plotinus the creative work of the ψυχή was co-eternal with the νοῦς and τὸ ἕν, while for Augustine creation did possess a "temporal" as well as a merely logical beginning. Nevertheless, there are very great similarities between the Plotinian and Augustinian understanding of time and eternity. According to Augustine, God isbeyond time, though He also works within time[2]; in fact eternity is the very substance of God.[3] In contra-distinction to this view of eternity as the absolute "Est", Augustine tends to denigrate time as being just a mere flux.[4] There is, thus, in the cosmological thought of Augustine the same tension between time and eternity as there is in Plotinus.

In order to bridge the gap between the temporal and eternal worlds, Augustine adopted the Platonic doctrine of ideas which are, however, not to be thought of as independent of, but within, the mind of the Creator:

> Sunt namque ideae principales formae quaedam, vel rationes rerum stabiles atque incommunicabiles, quae ipsae formatae non sunt, ac per hoc aeternae ac semper eodem modo sese habentes, quae in divina intelligentia continentur.[5]

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1. Enn. III. vii. 11.
2. Conf. xiii. XXXVII. 52. XXXII. c. 868.
3. En. in Ps. 101. 10. XXXVII. c. 1311.
4. En. in Ps. 38. 7. XXXVI. c. 418f.
5. De Div. Quaest. Simplic. 83. xlvi. 2. XL. c. 30.

The chief of these Ideas is the Word.[1] In fact it appears that Augustine ascribes to the Word the same properties as Plotinus allows to the ψυχή in its creative work, and it is noteworthy that Plotinus calls the ψυχή in its two phases as All-Soul and Nature-Principle, the Logos.[2] It appears that the mediatory position in the Plotinian scheme of the All-Soul between νοῦς and the ψυχή was just another way of expressing the co-inherence of the ψυχή and the νοῦς .[3]

In Plotinus, however, there is not just one reason-principle just as there are many Ideas in the νοῦς , nevertheless all these reason-principles are unified under the world soul. Here we can detect a very great resemblance between the Plotinian scheme and the Augustinian "rationes seminales" which play such an important part in his doctrine of Creation.[4] These Augustine describes as "incommutabili Dei Sapientia rationes"[5], and through them all things come into existence.[6] At the same time the

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1. Sermo 117. 3. XXXVIII. c. 662f.

2. Enn. III. viii. 3.

3. Cf. Enn. III. ii. 16. and also for a discussion of this co-inherence P.V. Pistorius, Plotinus and Neo-Platonism, (Cambridge, 1952), pp.58-66.

4. For an excellent short description of work of the "rationes seminales" cf. .V.J. Bourke, Augustine's Quest of Wisdom, (Milwaukee, 1944), pp.224-247.

5. De Gen. ad Lit. I. ix. 17. XXXIV. c. 252.

6. Ibid. IV. xxxiii. 51. XXXIV. c. 317f.

"rationes seminales" only possess a created existence, and they are in no way co-eternal with God, but in fact must be distinguished from the eternal "rationes" in the Word.[1] According to Augustine, things may be considered in three ways: firstly according to their "rationes aeternae" in the Word of God, secondly in the work from which God rested on the seventh day of Creation (i.e. in their "rationes seminales"), and finally in the manner as they have been produced in the period of God's administration up to the present.[2] It appears thererore that the "rationes seminales" hold a mediatory position between the "rationes aeternae" in the mind or God and the ordinary sensible existents of human experience. Thus we may say that the "rationes seminales" possess a very similar function to the reason-principles in Plotinian thought. It must be remembered that Augustine allows that things can be known in their "rationes aeternae" in the mind or God[3], which we may hold as being roughly equivalent to the Ideas in the Plotinian νοῦς ; the reason-principles mediate between this eternal realm and the active work of the ψυχή in creation in time.

In the operation of these "reason-principles", however, there is a considerable difference between Plotinus and Augustine.

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1. De Gen. ad Lit. V. iv. 8. XXXIV. c. 324.

2. Ibid. V. xii. 28. XXXIV. c. 331.

3. Ibid. IV. xxiii. 40. XXXIV. c. 312.

According to the thought of the former, the "reason-principles" are not completely determinative of everything that happens within the realm of ψυχή as the limiting power of ὕλη , which is no substance but a kind of negative potentiality[1], must be taken into account. The nobler soul will make more headway against the restrictive power of matter[2], and as man is not completely determined by the latter because he possesses a free "reason-principle" within him, he can be held to be a responsible being.[3] We can see that in Plotinian thought human freedom is in no way related to indetermination, as such a quality is but one of the negative powers of ὕλη , which man in conformity to the "reason-principle" within should resist. Thus, at its roots, the Plotinian idea of human freedom and responsibility is very similar to that of Augustine, being in no way related to the possibility of indeterminate activity, but to behaviour in conformity with one's highest being. The difference is that the limiting factor on this free activity lies for Plotinus in the negative power of ὕλη , while for Augustine it is found in the irrationality and perversity of sin. It can be seen that the Augustinian cosmology has really far less room for indetermination that that of Plotinus, for Augustine cannot allow any

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1. Enn. III. vi. 7.
2. Enn. III. i. 8.
3. Enn. III. iii. 4.

indetermination as provided by the Plotinian ὕλη which is completely outside the control of God. Divine prescience alone is the real cause of the varying working-out of the "rationes seminales" within the created order.

This is clearly shown in Augustine's discussion of the relationship of miracles to the "rationes seminales".[1] According to the potentialities with which a "ratio seminalis" is endowed, it ought to develop in a certain way; however, it possesses certain other potentialities, which means that it can develop in another direction if God so determines it. Thus, it is not the normal working-out of the "ratio seminalis" of an ass that it should speak, but the "ratio" does possess this potentiality which is developed when God so determines, as in the case of Balaam's famous mount. Whether the usual or the unusual potentialities of a "ratio seminalis" come into operation depends solely upon the prescience of God, who reigns sovereign over the factors which determine the development of a "ratio".[2] Unlike the Plotinian "reason-principle", a "ratio seminalis" is not by itself the determiner of an individual existent within the temporal world; the actual behaviour of the existent depends upon what qualities within the "ratio" are brought into active operation by the Divine will. This has two modes of operation: that of

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1. De Gen. ad Lit. IX. xvii. 32. XXXIV. c. 406.

2. Ibid. VI. xvii. 28. XXXIV. c. 350f.

providence by which creatures receive their normal existence, and that of grace by which fallen creation is restored and miracles are performed.[1] It appears from this description that the concept of "rationes seminales" is not a very useful tool for describing the Christian doctrine of Creation. All the potentialities of a "ratio seminalis" do not manifest themselves in the world of time and event, but only those which God in His prescience chooses to bring into activity. The question may well be asked why a "ratio" may possess so many potentialities which because of the prescience of God will never be actualized. If the actuality of a created being is so determined by the prescience of God why should we bring in the mediating concept of a "ratio seminalis" at all? Surely, it would be easier to speak of the Divine activity in creation by which all things receive their existence than that matters should be complicated by the introduction of this rather unnecessary concept? Yet if one is working from the pre-supposition of the dependence of the created order upon the "rationes aeternae" in the mind of God, it is, however, necessary to introduce some mediating concept as that of the "rationes seminales". At the same time the course of creation cannot really be understood by Augustine in terms of "rationes aeternae", for besides the ordinary behaviour of created realities there is also the possibility of

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1. De Gen. ad Lit. IX. xviii. 33. XXXIV. c. 406.

grace. The usefulness of the concept of "rationes seminales" breaks down because of the possibility of miracle in the sense of a direct intervention within history, which is never allowed for in the Plotinian scheme. The world of space and time must be more than a moving copy of the eternal exemplars in the intelligible world if the possibility of specific miracles within history is to be admitted. Therefore, above the "rationes" must be postulated the dual Divine activity in providence and in grace. We must note also in this respect that once the concept of "rationes seminales" is abandoned, the distinction between the two modes of Divine activity in providence and grace can also be set aside, and we have creation depending upon the single activity of God - a view, in our opinion, which is truer to the Biblical witness than any rigid distinction between providence and grace.

We suggest that the reason why Augustine finds himself in such a dilemma is because a too radical distinction between time and eternity lies at the root of his thought. As because of this he cannot bring about any positive inter-relation between Time and the realm of Ideas, he is forced to endow every "ratio seminalis" with many unutilized potentialities, and then to introduce over and above these "rationes" the rather indeterminate concept of the prescience of God in providence and grace. Once, however, we have dispensed with a static ideal world as the ultimate cause of creation, the problem of time and eternity takes

on a radically different aspect. Time is not separated from the Divine world or evacuated of reality in relation to the eternal world of ideas. It is no longer a flux upon which the eternal forms must be imposed, but just the sphere of Divine activity. Predestination is not just the eternal gramophone record which is to be played out in time, but the initiative of God within time. The Incarnation is not just a hardly-conceivable irruption from the eternal world, but the fulfilment of the promises given within "Heilsgeschichte".

Yet it is just because Augustine cannot develop such a positive understanding of time that he is led into a thorough-going determinism, so that everything which happens within the created world is determined by God from all eternity.[1] There would appear, however, one way out of this determinist dilemma for Augustine in relation to the problem of evil. As he stressed the nature of evil as being that primarily of negation, lacking both in being and rationality, he could have argued that because of this lack of properties, it could not be included in the working-out of the "rationes seminales" in history. It would have been possible to argue that because of its very negative nature, evil was beyond comprehension by the "rationes seminales" and the prescience of God. Yet Augustine does not take this line, probably because he was afraid that it would lead to

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1. En. in Ps. 105. 35. XXXVII. c. 1416.

Manicheeism, where evil is given an independent existence over and against God. Rather Augustine prefers to think of evil being used within the system of the Divine Providence, though to a good end.[1] We meet a very similar type of solution in Plotinus, who argues that even wrongdoing belongs to the established order of the universe and is included in the justice of God, even if we cannot search out the reasons for it.[2]

We have seen that Augustine's Christology of Creation is interpreted through the Neo-Platonic doctrine of ideas, the Word being inclusive of the "rationes aeternae" which were mediated to the created world through the "rationes seminales". We have to ask, however, whether this interpretation is really compatible with the Christ-event - the Word made flesh, or rather the "Word made event". In a generalized sense, the Plotinian scheme could express the fact that the Word became flesh, but not that the Word became event. As Pistorius says:

> I can see no profound difference between Neo-Platonism and Christianity except, perhaps, for the particularized incarnation of the Logos. I say particularized for the incarnation of the Logos is also Plotinian. The words of St. John ὁ λόγος σὰρξ ἐγένετο, would, perhaps, in Plotinus have been ὁ λόγος σὰρξ γέγονεν, in order to disassociate that incarnation from the particular person and the particular moment in time. But nothing more.[3]

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1. De Civ. Dei xi. 18, 23. XLI. c. 332, 336f.; Ench. xcvi. 21. XL. c. 276.

2. Enn. IV. iii. 16.

3. Pistorius, op. cit., p.66.

Does history take its meaning in Augustine's understanding from "the Word made event"? In order to clarify this point let me quote from Karl Barth:

> The fact that the Word became flesh undoubtedly means that, without ceasing to be eternity, in its very power as eternity, eternity became time..... What happens in Jesus Christ is not simply that God gives us time, our created time, as the form of our own existence and the world, as is the case in creation and in the whole ruling of the world by God as its Lord. In Jesus Christ it comes about that God takes time to Himself, the eternal One, becomes temporal, that He is present for us in the form of our own existence and our own world, not simply embracing our time and ruling it, but submitting Himself to it, and permitting created time to become and be the form of His eternity.[1]

In Augustine on the other hand, the emphasis is upon the working-out of the eternal plan of God within and above the temporal order. Time itself is but a mere flux, scarcely bearing any meaning whatever in its own right, but only possesses a derived value from the eternal ordination of God. A single event in the temporal order has scarcely any significance for the fulfilment of God's eternal plan. This is clearly seen in the De Civitate Dei, where in the outworking of the destinies of the two cities, the historic Advent of our Lord receives the most cursory treatment, being dealt with in a mere three sentences.[2] The destinies of the two cities, the societies of the elect and

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1. Church Dogmatics, Vol.II. pt.1, (E.T.) p.616.

2. De Civ. Dei xviii. 46. XLI. c. 608; cf. J.H.S. Burleigh, The City of God, p.208.

the reprobate are shown to have little if any connection with the historic Christ-event. Yet this one fact only reveals Augustine's general attitude to history in the De Civitate Dei - the destiny of the two cities are determined from all eternity, and the only real use of historical events is that they serve for the disciplining and purification of the elect.[1]

This in turn, throws some light on the mixed attitude of Augustine towards the Church as the historical medium of salvation. It would of course been possible for the Church to have been regarded as the perfect embodiment within time of the eternal plan of election - that there would have been a perfect "communicatio" between the number of the elect and the Church as an historical institution. Such a belief could, however, only lead to perfectionism - and perfectionism was the root of the Donatist heresy which Augustine had resisted so strenuously. The only other alternative was to give the Church an essentially ambiguous position, partaking of all the relativity and flux of time, and yet also mediating the eternal plan of salvation. God used history and historical institutions to forward His plan of salvation, but His plan was in no way fully committed to these historical media. To transpose the problem into Christological language, the relationship between the Divine scheme of election

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1. Cf. K. Löwith's judgment on the Augustinian understanding of history in De Civitate Dei: "History is a divinely appointed pedagogy, operating mainly through suffering." Meaning in History, (Chicago, 1955), p.170.

and historical media was "occasional" rather than "enhypostatic".

Karl Löwith has maintained that Augustine possessed no real understanding of historical development, because after the absolute newness of the event of Christ, nothing really new could happen within history: "What Augustine achieves in the 'City of God' is therefore, an integration not of theology into history but of the faith of the primitive Church into the doctrine of the Church established."[1] In our opinion, nothing could be further from the truth than this; the fault of Augustine's theology of history is that it utterly fails to do justice to the utter newness of the Christ-event. In De Civitate Dei Augustine is thorough-going in viewing history "sub specie aeternatatis", but he has never taken into full consideration that this eternity has become incarnate in Jesus Christ. As we have seen there is in Augustine an increasing understanding of the old eschatological tension between "here" and "hereafter", though one perhaps suspects that for Augustine the End is as much a negation of historical reality as its consummation. There is also a touching stress on the humility of the Word in becoming Incarnate to heal our pride. Augustine sees Christ as the source of all Creation, but only through the medium of the Neo-Platonic doctrine of ideas - and that metaphysical form fails completely to do justice to Christ as the Incarnate Lord and Goal of history. This is why Augustine

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1. Löwith, op. cit., p.167.

has no real understanding of "inaugurated eschatology" being present in the life of the Church. The Divine plan of salvation fulfils itself through the ordinances of the Church, but is in no way committed to them; they, too, essentially belong to the ultimately meaningless flux of history. We see here why it is easy for Augustine to dispense with the ancient symbol of the Millenium; if history has no meaning in its own right, why should it possess a temporal consummation? It must be remembered that a purely eternal "consummation" of history as opposed to a temporal one can be equally said to negate as well as realize the sum of historical events. It can thus be seen that it is a failure in eschatological understanding that lies at the roots of the tension in Augustinian thought over the Church as the number of the elect and the body of the baptized. The doubtful position of the Church in Augustinian thought arises because it partakes of the ambiguity attaching to the whole of history in his thought.

Summary of Conclusion of the Section upon St. Augustine

1. The principal tenets of St. Augustine's teaching on grace did not develop out of the exigencies of the Pelagian controversy, but were already held by Augustine fifteen years earlier. Because of this, it is impossible to discount his later teaching as an unbalanced reaction against heresy.
2. The roots of the Augustinian teaching on predestination are to be found in his basic understanding of God as the eternal determiner of all events within the temporal world.
3. St. Augustine's doctrine of predestination is not Christo-centric insofar as the incarnate Christ is only the medium through which the anterior Divine ordination is brought to fruition, and cannot be considered as the origin of this pre-determination.
4. According to St. Augustine, baptism only confers an indelible status upon its recipient, and in no way guarantees his salvation, though the sacrament is normally necessary for this. Besides the grace of the forgiveness of sins in baptism there is also required for salvation the graces of conversion of heart and of final perseverance, which are in no way connected with the sacrament, but depend upon the Divine predestination which works in independence from it.
5. There is no explicit tension between Augustine's teaching on baptism and predestination. Divine predestination generally works through sacramental media, but is in no way

determined by them. Nevertheless, baptism, though not necessarily conferring salvation, possesses an importance in its own right as the medium through which God generally chooses to convey His forgiveness.

6. Election is one of the prime motifs in the theology of the New Testament, and arises out of the consciousness of the Early Church as the "eschatological congregation". In the New Testament there are two main strands of teaching on this matter: (a) Pauline - which stresses the Divine initiative in "Heilsgeschichte" in relation to the People of God, and (b) Johannine, which witnesses to the eschatological finality of the mission of Christ as the κρίσις within history. The former strand tended to be stressed primarily in post-apostolic Christianity, but later, by the end of the second century, the whole question of predestination was relegated to the region of philosophical prologomena to the faith. The term was only brought back into circulation in Western Christendom by Victorinus, and it seems to have been a part of his Platonic understanding of the Gospel.

7. Baptism also in New Testament times arose out of the Church's eschatological consciousness, and its prime signification was that of incorporation into the fullness of Christ as already present in the "eschatological congregation". Afterwards, for a variety of reasons, baptism came to be thought of as conferring upon the individual certain specific

gifts, and not that of incorporation into the fullness of Christ. This prepared the way for the Augustinian understanding of it as a mere indelible sign, which only conferred forgiveness of sins upon the individual when God so willed it to do.

8. The eschatology of the New Testament Church was both "futuristic" and "inaugurated", and was primarily orientated corporately and cosmically towards the "parousia", rather than being centred upon the individual and his destiny. In the post-apostolic age, the future hope, though still intense, had lost its earlier immediacy, and the understanding of "inaugurated" eschatology tended to disappear. Later eschatology tended to become individualized and spiritualized (Origenic school), or eschatological symbols were interpreted as applying to the life of the Church in this world (Eusebius). The Church almost loses the unified eschatological consciousness witnessed to in the New Testament. When Augustine appears, there is no such unified understanding of the Last Things in the Church to which he could give his allegiance.

9. In the thought of St. Augustine there is a constant tension between his acceptance of the historic Incarnation and the Neo-Platonic understanding of the world as the temporal emanation of the eternal realm of Ideas. In relation to eschatology, the Biblical strand which stressed the tension between "now" and "hereafter" managed to dominate the Neo-

Platonic tension between "here" and "yonder". On the other hand, for Augustine the eternal world was still determinative of all that happened in time, and this prevented him from doing justice to the Incarnation as the active source of the Divine predestination within history.

10. The basic reason for Augustine's inability to do justice to the New Testament teaching concerning baptism and predestination was his failure to understand the eschatological unity of New Testament thought. In particular, his Platonic pre-suppositions prevented him from doing justice to the teaching concerning the "inaugurated" corporate eschatology of the New Testament, which in turn led his predestinarian and baptismal teaching to take an individual orientation.

Chapter VIII.

Predestination and Election in the Teaching of Calvin

To the popular religious mind Calvin is above all the theologian of predestination, despite the fact that the same "motif" is equally integral to the thought of St. Augustine, and in a somewhat different way to that of Aquinas. The doctrine of predestination has a perfectly just claim to be a rightful part of the orthodox Western Christian tradition - both in its Catholic and Protestant branches. Why then is Calvin often regarded as par excellence the theologian of predestination? Is this because the doctrine of predestination is particularly central to his system?

Notable historians of doctrine have taken this view from Alexander Schweizer[1] to O. Ritschl[2]; on the other hand, equally redoutable theologians as A. Ritschl[3] have given it a more or less peripheral place in Calvin's thought. In our opinion, the whole question of the centrality or otherwise of predestination in Calvin's thought is based upon a misunderstanding of his theological method. No theologian before Schleiermacher ever seized on a single principle, and from it deduced the whole of his system. According to his prefaces, Calvin's intention was to give his readers a summary of the teaching of Scripture so

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1. Die Glaubenslehre der evangelisch-reformierten Kirche, (Zürich, 1844).

2. Dogmengeschichte der Protestantismus, t.III, (Göttingen, 1926).

3. "Geschichtliche Studien zur Christlichen Lehre von Gott", Jahrb. f. deutsche Theologie, 1868, p.108.

that they might approach the Bible with better understanding. The varying forms of the different editions of the "Institutes" show that Calvin had no idea that he was writing his theology around any architectonic principle. The 1536 "Institutio", probably influenced in form by Luther's Shorter Catechism, consisted of a commentary on the Decalogue, the Apostle's Creed, and the Lord's Prayer, followed by chapters on the two dominical sacraments, the five so-called sacraments, and Christian liberty. The editions of the "Institutio" between 1539 - 1554 commence with chapters on the knowledge of God and the knowledge of man followed by a chapter on the law. In the editions after 1543, this in turn is followed by a discussion of monastic vows, then an exposition of the Apostle's Creed which is also found in the 1539 edition. After 1543, this exposition is divided into four parts, and is then succeeded by chapters on penance, justification by faith and the difference between the Old and New Testaments. In the 1539 edition, this is followed by a chapter on the predestination and providence of God, but in later editions two chapters on Christian liberty and human traditions intervene. Then follows an exposition of the Lord's Prayer, three chapters on the Sacraments, and the post-1543 editions are concluded by chapters on the five false sacraments, political government and the life of the Christian man. In the 1539 edition, chapters on Christian liberty, Church power and political government intervene between the chapter on the Lord's Supper and the five

false sacraments. In the final edition of 1559 the form is even more simple, consisting of four books on the knowledge of God the Creator, God the Redeemer, the means of receiving the Grace of Christ, and the external means of salvation. A knowledge of the bare form of the 1559 edition might suggest that Calvin held some architectonic principle in view, but the almost haphazard structure of the earlier editions successfully refutes this.

Moreover, the varying positions given to the doctrine of predestination in these editions emphasizes that this principle was no central motif with Calvin. In the 1536 edition, the doctrine of predestination is primarily met with in the exposition of the clause "credo sanctam ecclesiam", and the stress there is upon the Church defined as the "universum electorum numerum", the doctrine being used to emphasize the stability of our salvation in Christ.[1] In the editions 1539 - 54 the chapter "De praedestinatione et providentia Dei" follows either a chapter on the difference between the Old and New Testaments or one on human traditions, and it precedes the exposition of the Lord's Prayer. In the 1559 edition, the contents of this chapter which deal with the predestination to salvation or reprobation of men are placed towards the end of Book III following the long discussion of justification by faith and the chapters on Christian

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1. I. cc. 72-81. See whole section.

liberty and prayer. The contents of the chapter which deal with Providence are placed in Book I after the chapters on Creation and the original state of man. The very ordering of the theme of Predestination in the "Institutes" shows that Calvin had no conscious idea that it could be in any way the foundation-stone of his theology.

At the same time, it must be admitted that in the various editions of the "Institutes", Calvin came to give the theme of predestination more and more attention. The main reason for this was because the doctrine of predestination was one of the prime sources of controversy at that time. In the 1539 edition, Calvin felt it was necessary to oppose both Zwingli, who in his De Providentia Dei seemed to affirm that it was possible to have a clearer understanding of divine predestination than Calvin would allow, and Melanchthon who argued that predestination ought to be accepted and left as a mystery. In the next twenty years Calvin was on and off engaged in controversy over predestination - his chief protagonists being Pighius, Bolsec and Castellio.[1] It was at this point that his understanding of Grace was most seriously attacked, and the very pre-occupation with its defence revealed to him how integral it was to his entire theological understanding. At the same time, Calvin never looked upon this doctrine as the

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1. For description of these controversies, especially those with Bolsec and Castellio, see A. Bernel, Calvin, Défenseur de la prédestination, diss. Geneva, 1930.

root of his theology. Even in the final edition of the "Institutio", he still kept his main discussion of the doctrine in the position which implied that it was the great support for justification by faith and the liberty of the Christian man ensuing from that doctrine. To quote Doumergue: "La prédestination n'est pas le fondement sur lequel s'élève la théologie de Calvin, mais le clef de voûte qui en soutient l'édifice."[1]

The doctrine of predestination was not a mere logical necessity by which Calvin endeavoured to bind together the whole of his theology. To him it was the great buttress of what he regarded as essential in piety. It alone enables us to give rightful glory to God, instils true humility into our souls, and gives us true certainty of our salvation.[2] It is this knowledge that the purposes of God cannot fail, which alone prevents us from giving way to despair when we see the desperate condition of the Church.[3] So essential is the doctrine of predestination to piety that Calvin can even say that the doctrine of the Papists is more holy and agreeable to Scripture than that of

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1. Jean Calvin, t. iv., (Lausanne, 1910), p.357. For a discussion of the development of Calvin's understanding of predestination see Doumergue, op. cit., t. iv. 7. 1., and P. Barth, "Die biblische Grundlage der Prädestinationslehre bei Calvin" in De l'élection éternelle de Dieu (Actes du Congrès international de théologie calviniste, Geneva, 1936).

2. Inst. 3. 21. 1. II. c. 679.

3. Com. on Ps. 147. 2. XXXII. c. 426.

those who try to reject the doctrine of election.[1]

At the same time, the true nature of Calvin's understanding of predestination cannot be understood unless it is seen in relation to the basic "motifs" of his theology, especially in regard to his teaching concerning the Living God and the nature of man. When we call God Creator, we affirm that everything is maintained in existence by His constant operation, and confess Him to be the preserver and sustainer of His creation.[2] We must not think of God as a kind of wise manager or skilful general who foresees the plans of his enemies and then forms his counters to them.[3] Neither must God be thought of as imparting a general motion to the world, each creature then acting "pro naturae sibi inditae ratione".[4] For God to govern the world through each creature's nature would only lead to confused government.[5] Therefore, Calvin rejects any idea that God only governs through prescience; the reason why God foreknows an event is because He has determined it.[6] Calvin laughs at the defence that God's foreknowledge does not prevent unbelievers from being saved, because it can immediately be

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1. Serm. on 2 Tim. 1. 9, 10. LIV. c. 53.
2. Inst. I. 16. 1. II. c. 144f.
3. De Aet. Prae. VIII. c. 355.
4. Inst. I. 16. 4. II. c. 147.
5. Com. Acts 2. 23. XLVIII. c. 39.
6. Com. Gen. 41. 17. XXXIII. c. 521f.; Com. Zech. 6. 1-3. XLII. c. 203.

objected that it lies with God whether they are to receive the gifts of faith and repentance or not.[1] Both prescience and predestination are attributed by Calvin to God, but he categorically refuses to make the latter in any way dependent upon the former.[2] The distinction between the two faculties in the thought of Calvin has been succinctly summed up by Savary as:

> la prescience divine est une vision objective au-dessus du temps et de l'espace, qui ne determine en rien le cours des choses, tandis que la prédestination est un acte subjectif de la volonté divine dans le temps et l'espace, qui détermine le cours de l'existence de l'univers, en particulier de la vie humaine".[3]

It will be realized that this disparagement of prescience as in any way determining the divine activity flows logically from Calvin's understanding of God's action in governing the world. If God governs His creation directly, leaving no real place for activity by created natures, nothing can possibly be foreseen by God apart from His own actions, for in the last resort nothing else really happens. It must be admitted that such a position cannot be distinguished from Pantheism. On the other hand, Calvin in his discussion of the responsibility of man and of original sin does allow that man possesses a nature of his own.

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1. Com. Mt. 23. 34. XLV. c. 639.

2. Inst. 3. 21. 5. II. c. 682f.

3. La prédestination chez Calvin, (Paris, 1901), p.15.

If man does not possess a nature, how can it be depraved by the Fall? Here we meet the basic question which every theology of "sola gratia" must face: how is it possible to do justice to the all-sufficiency and omnipotence of the creative and redemptive activity of God, and at the same time maintain the reality of the creature. In our discussion of Calvin, we shall repeatedly have to return to this theme.

Just as Calvin cannot allow predestination to depend upon prescience, so he also cannot admit any distinction between permission and ordination.[1] To permit a creature to do something is to admit that the creature also has some ability which it can exercise in its own right. Calvin recognizes three ways in which God acts by men:

> Primum, quod omnes per ipsum movemur et sumus: unde sequitur omnes actiones ab eius virtute manere. Deinde peculiari modo agit ac flectit quocunque visum est impios: et quamvis nihil minus cogitent, eorum tamen utitur opera, ut se mutuo conficiant ac perdant: vel ut populum suum eorum manu castiget ..... Tertio, quum gubernet suo spiritu sanctificationis: quod electis singulare est.[2]

God so rules and governs men that they cannot even move one of their fingers without accomplishing a work of God.[3] His control of men's action is twofold - not only does He influence their minds in whatever direction He wishes, but He also overrules even

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1. 3rd Serm. on Jacob and Esau LIX. c. 45.

2. Com. on Is. 10. 5. XXXVI. c. 215.

3. De Aet. Prae. VIII. c. 356.

their wicked devices to a good end.[1] Why the latter type of sovereignty is necessary besides the former is a question which Calvin does not discuss, but this very passage does reveal Calvin's lack of clarity concerning the status of human activity. A similar tension is also to be detected in Calvin's Commentary on Daniel 1.9 where it is argued that while everyone has a peculiar temperament from his birth, yet God changes a man's disposition moment by moment as it seems good to him. Calvin will not deny to the creature a certain status, yet it is hard to discover what reality this status possesses.

This raises the question as to what is Calvin's attitude in regard to secondary causation. On occasion, he seems to admit it in the fullest sense of the word.

> Verum quidem est, Deum nihil agere quod non occulta sua providentia ante mundi creationem decreverit: sed aliquando interveniunt mediae causae cur hoc vel illud fiat.[2]

In other passages, however, Calvin will hardly allow "second causes" any status whatever, and they are regarded as "instrumenta" rather than as real agents: "sunt igitur nihil aliud quam instrumenta quibus Deus assidue instillat quantum vult efficiae, et pro suo arbitrio ad hanc vel illam actionem flectit ac convertit."[3]

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1. Com. on Ps. 105. 17. XXXII. c. 105f.

2. Com. on Ex. 4. 14. XXIV. c. 57.

3. Inst. I. 16. 2. II. c. 145.

And even if this is only "de rebus inanimatis", from what Calvin has said, it is hard to see him giving human beings any higher status. Any idea that God is just the primary cause is definitely rejected[1], while the bringing forward of proximate causes to cover the real cause of Divine predestination or reprobation in religious discussion is also disallowed by Calvin.[2]

In other passages, however, he seems to suggest that God's activity does not violate the nature of secondary causes, but is not separated from them.[3] He is even willing to admit that there is a certain congruency between the movements of the planets and those of human dispositions.[4] At the same time, he refuses to admit that the planets have anything to do with the saving grace of God.[5] In other words, the grace of God is more direct in its operation than his activity working through planets on the dispositions of the human body. It appears that in certain respects, other creatures can truly mediate the divine activity, but in relation to Grace this activity is purely immediate. Once again the real status of the creature is obscure.

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1. Inst. I. 16. 3. II. c. 146f.
2. Com. on Ro. 11. 7. XLIX. c. 216.
3. De Aet. Prae. VIII. c. 354.
4. Advertissement contre d'Astrologie qu'on judicaire, VII. p.518.
5. Ibid., p.520.

Calvin sought to meet two main objections against his view of the living God. In the first place, was not Calvin's God just another name for fate? His reply to this is that he does not conceive of God's rule to be similar to an unbreakable causal sequence, but the determined and intelligent action of the Living God.[1] Calvin does not attack the all-embracingness and irresistibility of the idea of fate, but refuses to accept the impersonality of the Stoic conception.[2]

The second objection was that Calvin's view made God the author of evil. Calvin definitely refused to take the Augustinian line of defence here by arguing that as evil is essentially a negation of being, God could not be regarded as its author. Instead Calvin preferred to say that those things which are wickedly done by man, can at the same time be justly the works of God.[3] Men commit theft or murder because they are thieves or murderers, but God uses their wickedness to a righteous end, either to chastise one person or exercise the patience of another.[4] Calvin refuses to say that the wicked sin by necessity,

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1. Inst. I. 16. 8. II. c. 151f.; Com. on Ex. 21. 12. XXIV. c. 622f.; Con. Pighium Vi. p.257.

2. For an interesting discussion of Calvin's attitude to Stoicism, see J. Bohatec,"Calvins Vorsehungslehre"in Calvinstudien, (Leipzig, 1909), pp.415-441.

3. De Aet. Prae. VIII. c. 353. For a further discussion of Calvin's difference from Aug. on this point see J. Cadier, "Augustin et Calvin" in Augustinus Magister, (Paris, 1954), t.2, pp.1039-56.

4. Com. on Acts 2. 23. XLVIII. c. 40.

but rather the necessity lies in that God works out His plan through their evil deeds.[1] He uses the analogy of a dead body which gives off putrifying odours when placed in the sun, and yet we do not blame the sun for these odours. So we must regard the action of God in regard to the wickedness of men; His righteous action brings forth their wickedness, yet He cannot in any way be regarded as responsible for their sin.[2] It is noteworthy that in this defence, Calvin recognizes that man possesses a nature of his own, and that he is not just a purely passive instrument in the hands of God. One suspects that when Calvin is discussing divine justice and human responsibility, he has a somewhat different view from what one would expect from some of his statements concerning the all-embracing nature of providence.

What then is Calvin's understanding of man?[3] This may best be discussed under two main heads: man as he was created before the Fall, and then man after the Fall. Man was created in the image of God which primarily resides in the soul, though as Calvin extends the term to include all the ways in which man surpasses the animal creation, there is no part, even of the body,

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1. Con. Pig. VI. c. 256.

2. Inst. I. 17. 5. II. c. 158.

3. For an exhaustive treatment of this topic, see T. F. Torrance, Calvin's Doctrine of Man, (London, 1949).

in which some sign of the image is not found.[1] The nature of the soul is primarily aspiring, seeking to approach unto God.[2] Contrary to the popular belief, Calvin did not teach the idea of "the primacy of the will"[3]; in fact, he rejected any view that the freedom of the will lay in a natural instinct to desire good. He agreed with the dictum of Aquinas that there is no act of free will, unless reason looks at opposites:

> Nihil ergo hoc ad arbitrii libertatem, an homo sensu naturae ad bonum appetendum feratur; sed hoc requiritur, ut bonum recta ratione diiudicet, cognitum eligat, electum persequatur.[4]

This point is essential, if we are to understand rightly Calvin's teaching on free-will; the will itself is unimpaired by the Fall, the freedom which is lost is that of the intellect. In one passage Calvin compares human freedom to that of God and the devil; God's free-will is not impeded because He necessarily must act rightly, while the devil sins voluntarily though by necessity he can do nothing but evil. If that is the case man does not sin less voluntarily because he is under the necessity of sinning.[5] Freedom to Calvin is a question of deliberate

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1. Inst. I. 15. 3. II. c. 138.
2. Inst. I. 15. 6. II. c. 140ff.
3. Com. on Eph. 4. 17. LI. c. 204.
4. Inst. 2. 2. 26. II. c. 207.
5. Inst. 2. 3. 5. II. c. 213f.

choice, never of sheer indeterminacy.

Man was created with freedom of will, by which if he chose, he would be able to obtain eternal life. Adam could have stood if he had so wished, and though he was not granted the gift of perseverance it was by his own will that he fell.[1] In this discussion, however, Calvin expressly leaves the question of predestination on one side, while in his commentary on Genesis, he even goes as far as to say that though Adam was created flexible, God not only permitted but willed him to be tempted and adapted the tongue of the serpent that this might be possible.[2] One further point must, however, be made concerning Adam; he not only received the various human endowments for himself, but also for the whole human race. When these were lost to him by the Fall, they were at the same time lost to mankind[3], as Adam's corruption was to be passed on to his descendents.

Adam then is the root of the human race[4], and as a result of his fall though the image of God is not totally effaced in man, it is so corrupted as to be nothing more than a fearful deformity.[5] Though everyone is liable to punishment because of

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1. Inst. 1. 15. 8. II. c. 143.
2. Com. on Gen. 3. 7. XXIII. c. 63f.
3. Inst. 2. 1. 7. II. c. 181f.
4. Inst. 2. 1. 6. II. c. 180.
5. Inst. 1. 15. 4. II. c. 138.

his own deeds, yet original sin alone is sufficient for the condemnation of all men.[1] Although sin may not openly appear in young children, yet there is so much latent corruption enclosed in their souls to render them worthy of condemnation before God.[2] Calvin's telling argument against predestination "post praevisa merita" is that all God could possibly foresee in men apart from the working of His grace, would be worthy of eternal condemnation.[3] The depravity caused by the Fall is of a total nature[4], and the whole man falls under the influence of sin:

> sic prorsus agimur peccati imperio, ut tota mens, totum cor, omnes actiones in peccatum propendeant. Coactionem semper excipio: sponte enim peccamus, quia peccatum non esset, nisi voluntarium. Sed addicti sumus ita peccato, ut nihil sponte possimus quam peccare: quia malitia, quae in nobis dominatur huc nos rapit.[5]

It is on this point of total depravity that Calvin expressly quarrels with the Roman Church; though they admit, he says, that our nature has become depraved, they try to limit to the position of an inclination to evil residing in the inferior part of the soul, and deny that it exists in a person subsequent to baptism. We can, however, have no real idea of sin, unless we

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1. Com. on Ezek. 18. 20. XL. c. 440f.
2. Com. on Ezek. 18. 1-4. XL. c. 425.
3. De Aet. Prae. VIII. c. 308.
4. Inst. 2. 1. 9. II. c. 183f.
5. Com. on Rom. 7. 14. XLIX. c. 128f.

think of it extending to every part of the soul and corrupting every part of the heart and mind of man.[1] Moreover, he erects this doctrine of total depravity against any insinuation that man has something of his own which he is able to contribute towards his salvation.[2]

Sweeping as this may seem, Calvin will not, however, allow that every gift of God has been completely lost to man; instead he quotes with approval the saying of Augustine that man's natural gifts have been corrupted by sin, while his supernatural ones have been taken away.[3] Man still possesses intelligence to understand earthly things - among which are included by Calvin, politics, science, and the liberal arts, but the utter incapacity of this reason is revealed once it attempts to raise itself to divine matters.[4] He reminds us that though the sons of Cain were deprived of the Spirit of regeneration, yet the gifts which they still possessed were of no despicable kind, and that it is even from the heathen that we have received such gifts as astronomy, medicine, and civil government.[5] These gifts just as much as those of regeneration are given by the Spirit.[6] Thus in one

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1. Com. on Ps. 51. 7. XXXI. c. 513.
2. Nec. Ref. Church. VI. c. 483.
3. Inst. 2. 2. 12. II. c. 195.
4. Inst. 2. 2. 13. II. c. 197.
5. Com. on Gen. 4. 20. XXIII. c. 100.
6. Inst. 2. 2. 15. II. c. 198.

sense, Calvin can speak about man still receiving certain gifts from the Spirit even in his fallen condition. On other occasions, he expresses this idea in a rather different way by saying that in man there still exists some remnant of the divine image, as the Creator still keeps in view His end in creating man.[1] In an extended sense all men can be called sons of God because there still remains in them some traces of the divine image.[2]

What kind of knowledge is then left to man after the Fall? Calvin answers this briefly in his commentary on John 1.5:

> Duae sunt praecipuae luminis partes, quod adhuc in corrupta natura residet. Nam omnibus ingenitum est aliquod religionis semen: deinde insculptum est eorum conscientiis boni et mali discrimen.[3]

Concerning the light or natural religion which is left to man, Calvin afrirms that there is no race so barbarous which does not possess some conviction of the existence of a God.[4] In some sense, when a man gains some idea of God's power and divinity, he also begins to know that this divinity cannot exist without possessing all the attributes of God - so in a certain manner this sense of religion does give man a knowledge of God.[5] The

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1. Com. on Gen. 9. 6. XXIII. c. 147.
2. Com. on Acts 17. 28. XLVIII. c. 417.
3. Com. on Jn. 1. 5. XLVII. c. 6.
4. Com. on Hab. 1. 16. XLIII. c. 515.
5. Com. on Ro. 1. 20. XLIX. c. 24.

power of sin, however, is such that this "confusa notitia" is immediately perverted by man into an idol.[1] Calvin suggests that this natural knowledge of God is really given so that we might be without excuse.[2]

Concerning the sense of morality which even fallen men possess, Calvin declares that even if men had never known the doctrine of the law, yet they would have been taught by nature that human life is precious in the eyes of God.[3] Though man is often deceived concerning right and wrong, God has still left some power of discrimination to render man without any excuse[4], and even the fact that we should repent is taught us by nature.[5]

Earlier we have seen that the centre of human nature lay in the intellect, and that it was this distortion and corruption which leads to the total loss of human freedom. Even in the intellect of fallen man there are certain sparks of knowledge concerning God and his duty, yet because of his fallenness, this knowledge is radically distorted and obscured. It is through this distortion of knowledge that fallen man loses his freedom. Human will is not lost at all by the Fall; it is

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1. Com. on Eph. 4. 17. LI. c. 204.
2. Inst. 2. 2. 18. II. c. 200.
3. Jonah 1. 13-14. XLIII. c. 227.
4. Com. Gen. 26. 10. XXIII. c. 361.
5. Com. Zech. 1. 1-3. XLIV. c. 130; Je. 35. 12-15. XXXIX. c. 111.

inherent to our nature, and is not even a gift of the Spirit.[1] Calvin will not allow the loss of the power of choice to be the same as the loss of free-will; he refuses to interpret Je. 13.23 as having anything to do with free-will, but rather concerns the loss of choice due to wrong habit.[2] He clearly distinguishes between enslavement and compulsion in regard to the will:

> Verum docendi causa, quid significet, dicendum est, ut intelligatur quid sit coactio. Eam ergo sic vocamus, quae non sponte sua, nec interiore electionis motu, inclinatur huc vel illuc, sed externo motu violenter fertur. Spontaneam dicimus, quae ultro se flectit, quocunque ducitur, non autem rapitur, aut trahitur invita. Serva postremo voluntas est, quae propter corruptionem sub malarum cupiditatem imperio captiva tenetur, ut nihil quam malum eligere posse, etiam si id sponte et libenter, non externo motu impulsa, faciat. Secundum has definitiones homini arbitrium concedimus, idque spontaneum, ut, si quid mali facit sibi ac voluntariae suae electioni imputare debeat.[3]

If a free-will is to be opposed to a coerced one, Calvin will say that man possesses the former, and would oppose as an heretic anyone who would deny it.[4]

We can see therefore that Calvin does definitely teach that man possesses a nature of his own; he has a reason, even if radically corrupted, while his power of choice is unimpaired.

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1. Com. Ezek. 11. 20. XL. c. 248.
2. Com. Je. 13. 23. XXXVIII. c. 171f.
3. Resp. con. Pig. VI. p.280.
4. Ibid. c. 279.

Even his corrupted intellect has enough knowledge of God and of right and wrong to be rendered without excuse. At times, Calvin speaks of these as residual gifts left to the posterity of Adam after the Fall; at others, they are referred to as the non-regenerative activity of the Spirit. Man only exists in relation to the activity of God, and yet at the same time, he possesses an existence in his own right, a nature of his own. That is the paradox of Calvin's teaching on the matter. We have just looked at it from the point of view of man as an existent being, our next task is to consider it from the point of God's gracious activity.

As we have seen, Calvin made a clear distinction between the natural and supernatural gifts of God, the former being impaired by the Fall, while the latter were taken away entirely. Yet both these natural and supernatural gifts were the work of the Spirit. Calvin can speak of the diversity of the gifts of the Spirit not only in relation to the gifts following regeneration but also to those of the natural order.[1] Progress in knowledge is only derived from the continued operation of the Spirit.[2] We must remember that strictly speaking, Calvin regarded grace not as a gift to us, but as characteristic residing in God; what we receive is really not grace but the effects of grace.[3] Grace

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1. Com. Ex. 31. 2. XXV. c. 58.

2. Ibid. 31. 6. XXV. c. 59.

3. Com. Ro. 5. 15. XLIX. c. 98f.

is really the mode of the presence of God; the differing types of grace are really the various modes of the Divine activity towards men.[1] God can bestow an external blessing upon a person though He does not impart to him the grace which He grants to the elect.[2] It is because both the natural and spiritual orders find their origin in the same divine activity which yet expresses itself in different modes, that Reformed theologians have been able to conceive both Church and State as being ordained by God and yet essentially independent of one another.

Besides, however, these gifts which were granted to mankind outside the covenant of grace, there is another mode of divine activity apart from the regenerating grace which alone is imparted to the elect. This "medium quiddam" is granted to those who belong to the covenant-people of God, and who yet are not necessarily elected for salvation.[3] Calvin is emphatic that God has only made one covenant with mankind, that with Abraham, though its dispensations are different. Through belonging to the covenant-people, whether Israel or the Church, one possesses the outward marks of adoption.[4] The Jews, though they were naturally cursed because they belonged to the seed of

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1. Com. Gen. 21. 20. XXIII. c. 305.
2. Com. John 13. 18. XLVII. c. 311.
3. Inst. 3. 21. 7. II. c. 685f.
4. Com. Jer. 31. 31-32. XXXVIII. c. 688f.

Adam, yet by the privilege of the covenant, became exempt from this curse, though many of them fell away from this covenant by unbelief.[1] Those who are born into covenant will possess a greater degree of guilt if they fall away from it, than those who have been always outside.[2] Calvin's position in regard to election to the covenant is briefly set forth in the Commentary on Hosea:

> ..... duplicem fuisse Dei electionem in populo illo: una enim fuit generalis electio, altera specialis. Specialis fuit electio sancti Jacob, quia vere erat unus ex Dei filiis: specialis etiam fuit eorum electio qui vocantur a Paulo filii promissionis. Fuit alia generalis electio, quia totum eius semen recepit in fidem suam, et omnibus foedus suum obtulit. Interea non omnes fuerunt regeniti, non omnes donati sunt adoptionis spiritu. Illa ergo generalis electio non fuit efficax in omnibus.[3]

The efficacy in fact of the covenant was restricted only to those who were elected to salvation.[4] Nevertheless, there is an inferior work of the Spirit taking place even in the hearts of those who though outwardly belonging to the covenant are not truly elect.[5] There is no reason why God should not illuminate the minds of such non-elect with some sparks from His light and grant to them some perception of His goodness[6]; nevertheless,

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1. Com. Ezek. 16. 21. XL. c. 355.
2. Com. Hos. 4. 12. XLI. c. 282f.
3. Com. Hos. 12. 3-5. XLI. c. 454.
4. Com. Dt. 32. 5. XXV. c. 359.
5. Inst. 3. 2. 11. II. c. 406.
6. Com. Heb. 6. 4. LV. c. 71f.

such faith as they do possess is as the result of compulsion, that knowing of the power of God they are forced to show some reverence towards Him.[1] Calvin appeals in both these passages to Mk. 4:17 as his biblical authority for recognizing such a form of temporary faith.

The distinction between the elect and non-elect in the Church is that the former have received a true inward call from God, while the others have only heard the outward offer of the Gospel which is made to all men.[2] The invitation is made to all men, but only the sound enters the hearts of some.[3] It is always necessary that God should open the hearts of men if they are to be saved, nevertheless the unbeliever at least will know enough of the Gospel so that he may be rendered without excuse.[4]

Salvation according to Calvin is purely a work of grace; the human will contributes nothing of itself towards this event[5], nevertheless regeneration does take place through the human will:

> Nihil iam obstat quominus rite agere dicamur quod agit spiritus Dei in nobis, etiamsi nihil a se ipsa conferat nostra voluntas quod ab eius gratia separetur.[6]

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1. Com. Ps. 106. 12. XXXII. c. 120f.
2. Com. Joel 2. 32. XLI. c. 579.
3. Ps. 81. 14. XXXI. c. 766.
4. Inst. 3. 24. 13. II. c. 724.
5. Inst. 2. 3. 8,9. II. c. 217ff.
6. Inst. 2. 5. 15. II. c. 243.

Neither can the will of the elect resist this grace, and Calvin definitely taught that saving grace is always efficacious in its action because of its very nature.[1]

Calvin was well aware of the criticism which could be made against his doctrine of the universal offer of the Gospel, and the secret effectual call to the elect alone. Did not such a view presuppose two wills in God? He admitted that on the surface this seemed to be the case, yet he confesses his faith that the will of God is really simple and one, though because of our weakness, it is exhibited to us in two ways.[2] At the Last Day, we shall know seemingly divergent operations of the will of God were really one in purpose.[3] Calvin does not meet this charge by argument, but admits that it is only capable of an eschatological solution.

After considering the general fabric of Calvin's understanding of the relationship between God and His creation we can now approach his specific teaching on predestination. Calvin's approach to this doctrine was far from speculative, and continually he rebuked those who sought to pry into the depths of the divine counsel; his one desire in expounding this doctrine was to keep it conformed to the scriptural witness.[4] At the same time,

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1. Inst. 2. 3. 10. II. c. 220.
2. Com. Mt. 23. 37. XLV. c. 644.
3. Reply to Callumny 7. IX. c. 302f.
4. Inst. 3. 21. 2. II. c. 680.

Calvin refused to keep silent on this subject because of its darkness and difficulty, holding that if a doctrine was clearly taught in Scripture, it was there to be preached.[1]

Perhaps the clearest definition of predestination which Calvin gives is as follows:

> Praedestinationem vocamus aeternum Dei decretum, quo apud se constitutum habuit, quid de unoquoque homine fieri vellet. Non enim pari conditione creantur omnes; sed aliis vita aeterna, aliis damnatio aeterna praeordinatur. Itaque, prout in alterutrum finem quisque conditus est, ita vel ad vitam vel ad mortem praedestinatem dicimus.[2]

Thus Calvin definitely teaches a doctrine of double Predestination, and on occasion he states that there is no reason why God should not call all men in the same way, except that He chooses to distinguish some from others.[3] The fact is, however, that all men are not called, for otherwise, why has not God sent men to preach the Gospel to the Turks.[4] In one passage, Calvin speaks of the elect being an holy offering drawn out of mankind, in the same way as man exceeds the other creatures.[5]

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1. Inst. 3. 21. 3. II. c. 681.
2. Inst. 3. 21. 5. II. c. 683.
3. Com. Ps. 65. 5. XXXI. c. 605.
4. Cong. Elec. C.R. VIII. p.112.
5. Com. James 1. 16. LV. c. 392.

Was Calvin an infra- or supra-lapsarian?[1] Perhaps this is an illegitimate question, and we should not seek from Calvin decisions about questions which arose in later controversies. Nevertheless, Calvin has left several hints concerning his attitude on this question. In the first place, he affirms that predestination took place before the Fall of Adam - a position which is compatible both with infra- and supra-lapsarianism.[2] On occasion, however, he goes further than this and affirms that God not only foresaw Adam's fall, but actually arranged it, and in the Articles concerning Predestination, it is clearly stated:

> Hoc arcano Dei consilio factum est ut Adam ab integro naturae suae statu deficeret ac sua defectione traheret omnes suos posteros in reatum aeternae mortis.[3]

In one passage, however, where Calvin is discussing the question as to how Christ could have been appointed Redeemer before the Fall of Adam, he states that Christ was so appointed because God foresaw that man would not long remain in his integrity.[4] As

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1. It is commonly held that the Infralapsarians believe that God elected men after the Fall, the Supralapsarians before that event had taken place. Both groups, however, held that God had elected men before the Fall; the Infralapsarians in view of God's foreknowledge of that event, the Supralapsarians believing on the other hand that the Fall was ordained to fulfil the purpose of election and reprobation. Cf. the statement by G. Oorthuys, De l'élection éternelle de Dieu, p.65.

2. Com. Gal. 1. 15. L. c. 178; Mal. 1. 2-6. XLIV. c. 407; Ro. 11. 7. XLIX. c. 216.

3. Art. con. Pred. IX. c. 713.

4. Com. I Pe. 1. 20. LV. c. 225f.

we have seen previously, however, foreknowledge to Calvin is nothing more than God's subjective apprehension of what He intends to do - and so this passage does not really support the view that Calvin was an Infralapsarian.

Though Calvin was supralapsarian in outlook, and taught a definite doctrine of double predestination, yet there are places in his writings, where he seems to indicate that election and reprobation are not equally-balanced movements in the divine will. For example, in his comment on Mk. 4:12 he states that the Gospel by its own nature and intention does not harden the reprobate, but only accidentally so - in the same way as the sun is not to be blamed for the dimming of sight of weak-eyed people who are brought into the light.[1] Perhaps more significant than this passage is where Calvin states that there is no joy among the angels over the death of a sinner[2], and also when he definitely affirms that God derives no pleasure from the miseries of men, rejecting the idea that we are as balls with which God plays as the blasphemy of profane men. In the same passage, he further says that though God punishes men willingly because He is the judge of the world, at the same time He does not do this from the heart, because He wishes all to be innocent.[3] Nevertheless,

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1. Com. Mk. 4. 12. XLV. c. 361.

2. Com. Is. 1. 21. XXXVI. c. 49.

3. Com. Lam. 3. 33. XXXIX. c. 585.

Calvin adds to this passage the caveat that though this doctrine may be generally true, yet the prophet is here only addressing the faithful.

The main question, however, which we must ask concerning Calvin's doctrine of predestination is how far is it related to the work of Christ, and especially to His historic mission. Calvin possessed a very strong sense of the unity between Christ and His members; to be saved was nothing more nor less than to be engrafted into the body of Christ.[1] The idea of oneness between Christ and His people perhaps reaches its deepest expression in certain of his remarks concerning the suffering of Christ. Christ was given vinegar to drink on the Cross because it was fitting that whatever cruelty the reprobate should inflict upon His members, should be represented by a sign in His own sufferings.[2] Not only does Christ suffer daily in His members, but sufferings of the members are really the extension to them of the privilege of sharing in His also.[3] The whole Gospel is included in Christ; whoever departs one step from Christ, removes himself from the Gospel at the same time.[4] Though Calvin is insistent that there is only one covenant of grace, even if its administrations are different,

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1. Inst. 3. 2. 30. II. c. 422.
2. Com. Ps. 69. 21. XXXI. c. 646.
3. Com. Col. 1. 24. LII. c. 93f.
4. Com. Ro. 1. 3. XLIX. c. 9.

he is also careful to point out that the root of the covenant is in Christ not Abraham.[1]

How far, however, does Calvin regard Christ as the author of election, or is He in this essentially subordinate to the Father? Calvin is not completely clear on this point; in one paragraph of the "Institutio", he can both say that the donation of the Father is the first stage in our delivery to the protection of Christ, and then that Christ claims the right of electing in common with the Father.[2] Like Augustine, Calvin calls Christ the mirror of election, a term which he uses in two main ways. The first way is identical with Augustine's meaning; Christ's manhood is the great example of the unconditional nature of the divine election, being assumed without any previous merits.[3] Calvin, however, attaches a further significance to this phrase; God could only accept His people in Christ, and therefore we are elected in Him, not in ourselves.[4] This idea is clearly brought out in the Congregation on Election where it can be seen that election in Christ is synonymous with adoption in Him.[5] The fact that we are elected "in Christ" is the great proof that we

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1. Com. Ex. 4. 22. XXIV. c. 63.
2. Inst. 3. 22. 7. II. c. 693.
3. Inst. 3. 22. 1. II. c. 688.
4. Inst. 3. 24. 5. II. c. 716.
5. Cong. Elec. VIII. c. 95.

are unworthy to be elected in ourselves.[1] Because election is in Christ, the certainty of the believer finds its ground in His election alone.[2]

We must ask, however, how far election is connected with the work of the Son. In his commentary on Acts 20:21, Calvin declares that there is no part of our salvation which may not be found in Christ, yet in the list which follows election is noticeably missing.[3] In discussing salvation under the scholastic terminology of efficient, material, formal and final cause, he only allows Jesus Christ to be the second of these; the efficient cause is the good pleasure of the will of God.[4] Calvin's solution as to what part Christ played in the work of election is perhaps basically similar to that of Augustine - election is a part of the work of the discarnate Logos but not of the historic mission of Christ. It must be remembered that Calvin held that there were two distinct powers belonging to the Son of God, one of which is revealed in the structure of the world, and the other by which nature is restored.[5] This teaching concerning the dual work of the Logos is the source of the teaching by his successors

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1. Com. Eph. 1. 4. LI. c. 147.

2. De Aet. Prae. VIII. c. 318f.

3. Com. Acts 20. 21. XLVIII. c. 463.

4. Com. Eph. 1. 5. LI. c. 148ff. Cf. Com. Acts. 22. 16. XLVIII. c. 496.

5. Com. Jn. 1. 5. XLVII. c. 7.

of the extra Calvinisticum, and such an hypothesis as this enables us to understand why Calvin in almost the same breath could say the beginning of election was the donation of the elect to the Son by the Father, and then that Christ Himself had a share in the work of election.

Yet though our predestination has been always hidden with God, Christ is the channel through which it is received in our hearts.[1] Christ was appointed Redeemer before the foundation of the world[2], and is the head of angels as well as of men.[3] The Holy Spirit is bestowed upon Christ's human nature in order that He might enrich us with Him; Christ receives the Spirit for His members.[4] Here we meet a fresh problem - Calvin also insists that we are only drawn to Christ by the Spirit, and that until the Spirit works within us, Christ cannot be nothing more than an enigma to us.[5] By the Spirit, the Father draws the elect to the Son - yet how is this to be logically reconciled with the other statements of Calvin that Christ in His human nature has received the Spirit for believers? If these other statements are allowed their full force, greater stress must be laid on the

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1. Com. Mt. 11. 27. XLV. c. 319.
2. Com. I Pe. 1. 20. LV. c. 225.
3. Com. Mt. 17. 5. XLV. c. 488.
4. Com. Is. 11. 2. XXXVI. c. 235f.; Com. Jn. 1. 32. XLVIII. c. 27f.
5. Inst. 3. 2. 34. II. c. 426f.

drawing activity of the Spirit through the very historical work of Christ. If Calvin were to take seriously this line of thought, he would be forced to allow that Christ is not only the material cause of men's salvation, but must also in His incarnate work be regarded with the Father as the efficient cause as well.

How far did Calvin regard the work of Christ as universal in its scope? There is little in Calvin to suggest that He held the doctrine of a "limited atonement" which was held by his successors - a doctrine which arose more for a desire for logical consistency than out of fidelity to the Biblical witness. He states uncompromisingly that Christ came to bring the whole world under the authority of God and in obedience to Him.[1] Jesus Christ came not just to reconcile a few individuals to God, but to extend His grace over the whole world.[2] Calvin's exegesis of passages as Mt. 20:28 and Mk. 14:24 also comes to bear on this point; he holds that the "many" in these passages is to be interpreted as in Ro. 5:15 to cover the whole human race.[3] In a sermon, he exhorts his hearers that they do not allow souls to perish qui ont este rachetées par le sang de Jesus Christ.[4] Perhaps, however, the most important passage for assessing Calvin's attitude to this

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1. Com. Is. 42. 1. XXXVII. c. 59f.

2. Serm. I. Tim. 2. 5ff. LIII. c. 161.

3. Com. Mt. 20. 28. XLV. c. 559; Com. Mk. 14. 24. XLV. c. 711.

4. Serm. 2. Tim. 2. 19. LIV. c. 165.

question is his comment on I Jn. 2:3, where though he will not allow too general a meaning to be placed on this text as it was written primarily for the comfort of believers, yet he says that he accepts the distinction of the Schoolmen that Christ died sufficiently for the sins of the whole world, but efficiently only for the sins of the elect.[1] The reason why all do not receive the benefits of the death of Christ is that unbelief prevents them[2], but we must remember that Calvin frequently insists that faith is purely a gift of God. It is in the light of Calvin's distinction between sufficient and efficient atonement that we must interpret such a passage as his comment on Col. 1:20, which is on occasion quoted as support for the view that Calvin held to a doctrine of limited atonement.[3]

Corresponding to the universal nature of the work of Christ is the emphasis of Calvin on the fact that the Gospel is to be proclaimed to all men; we are reconciled to God in order that we should endeavour to make our brothers sharers of the same benefit.[4] We must include all men in our prayers as we do not know who are the elect[5]; even our deadly enemies may one day repent.[6] It is

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1. Com. I Jn. 2. 2. LV. c. 310.
2. Com. Heb. 9. 27. LV. c. 120.
3. Com. Col. 1. 20. LII. c. 89.
4. Com. Ps. 32. 8. XXXI. c. 322.
5. Com. Je. 15. 1. XXXVIII. c. 205.
6. Com. Ps. 109. 6. XXXII. c. 148.

especially our duty that we should in our behaviour regard all those who are called into the Church as belonging to the elect.[1] We should love all mankind, starting, however, with the household of faith.[2]

The reason for the general offer of salvation is twofold: in the first place it is to encourage believers, informing them that all who will may come; in the second place it is to render unbelievers completely without excuse.[3] Here once again we find the distinction between internal and external call, which we have discussed earlier, leading Calvin to say that God offers His word indiscriminately to good and bad, but that He works with His Spirit only in the elect.[4] We have seen, however, that if Calvin is to work out with due seriousness his teaching that the Spirit is given to the Incarnate Christ for His people, this rigid distinction between Word and Spirit in Calvin's thought cannot be maintained.

One final question we must ask concerning Calvin: what is his treatment of those parts of the Bible which appear to go against his teaching? Possibly the most important is I Tim. 2:4, which Calvin interprets, very like Augustine, to mean that God

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1. Com. I Cor. 1. 9. XLIX. c. 512.
2. Com. Col. 1. 4. LII. c. 78.
3. Inst. 3. 24. 17. II. c. 727f.; Com. Je. 8. 4. XXXVIII. c. 4.
4. Com. Ezek. 2. 3. XL. c. 65.

once having limited His mercy to a single nation, now extends it to the whole world and to every class, though not to every individual.[1] Though we may not fully admit Calvin's exegesis of this passage, yet by putting it in its strict context, it appears to be just as worthy an interpretation as that of those who would use the passage in its widest possible extent to overthrow any doctrine of double predestination. Neither can we call his exegesis of Ex. 32:31 unjustifiable, when he says that here Moses spoke out of the vehemence of his feelings, and therefore the verse does not imply that the book of life could be in any way altered.[2] On another passage, Ezek. 18:23, one feels less happy about his exegesis, when Calvin suggests that insofar as God offers pardon to the sinner, even without the gift of repentance, He does not will that sinner's death.[3] Yet, on the whole it must be admitted that Calvin faces fairly up to the passages in the Bible which militate against his position, and even when he seems to force the exegesis, it is surely allowable to interpret a single passage in the light of what he regards as the dominant stream of Biblical thought.

Out of this consideration of Calvin's understanding of predestination, certain points of importance arise. We have

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1. Serm. I. Tim. 2. 3-5. LIII. c. 147ff.

2. Com. Ex. 32. 31. XXV. c. 98.

3. Inst. 3. 24. 15. II. c. 725.

seen that the doctrine of predestination can be regarded as the keystone of the theological edifice of Calvin. It is completely congruous and integrated with his conception of God as the all-controlling and living Creator. It is, however, in his exposition of the all-controlling activity of God that Calvin runs into serious difficulties. The creature almost ceases to have any real existence of its own, and some of his phrases logically developed lead directly to Pantheism. Calvin is really in the toils of the tension, which every theistic doctrine has to meet - how is it possible to allow real existence both to God and to the creature.

At the same time, when Calvin is discussing the justice of God and human responsibility, he does allow to man a certain existence in his own right. Man does possess a nature, even if it is a nature depraved by the Fall. Yet even this status at times seems only perhaps to possess a rather ambiguous reality. An example of this is found in Calvin's insistence that all good human qualities are gifts of the Spirit. Instead of accepting the Thomistic distinction between natural and supernatural virtues, probably because it would seem to open the way to some conception of human merit apart from grace, Calvin speaks of the operation of the Holy Spirit on both natural and supernatural levels. The question arises, however, what existence does man then possess apart from this activity of the Holy Spirit. The only thing which Calvin seems to allow to man which is not the gift of the

Spirit, is the power of mere choice, whatever that may be. If one would seek to defend this insistence on the total working of the Holy Spirit by drawing a completely rigid distinction between His natural and supernatural activity, one only meets again in a rather different form, the problem of two wills in God - and though an assertion that at the Last Day these seemingly diverse operations will be found to be one may seem a fitting climax to a sermon, on cooler reflection it will appear not a very satisfactory way of escaping from a logical impasse. Earlier, we have accused Augustine of turning grace into graces; it appears that here Calvin is doing something very similar.

Roman Catholic writers following Mersch have described Protestantism as arising out of a situation, when the classical Scholastic understanding of the participation of created being in the Being of God had been lost, through the growth of Nominalism. This charge of being dominated by Nominalistic logic has been made by them against the Reformers primarily in the realm of justification, and on the whole has been well answered by Protestant writers.[1] If, however, this charge were made against the classical Protestant world-outlook, it might bear much more fruit; possibly the charge has not been made in that direction as this emphasis has tended to disappear from later Protestantism

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1. See, for example, D. Cairns, "Christ, the Church His Body and its Members" in Essays in Christology for Karl Barth, (London, 1956), pp.209-226.

without, however, any really satisfactory metaphysic taking its place.

The second point which arises out of our examination of Calvin's teaching is Christological. Calvin allows to the Son a share in the electing activity of the Father, yet this seems in no way to be connected with His incarnate work. The Spirit is given to the Incarnate Christ for His members, and yet the proclaimed Word does not bring salvation unless the activity of the Spirit is added to it. Is there, therefore, a sanctifying operation of the Spirit working through the Incarnate Word, while the regenerating activity of the Spirit is in a sense detached from the proclamation of the Gospel? Calvin does not enlighten us on this point, but those are the suspicions which naturally rise in our minds. The charge we must make is that Calvin appears afraid of allowing any effectiveness to the historic work of Christ, unless it is implemented by the Spirit from a transcendent source. Is not this another example of Calvin's ambiguity concerning the reality and status of created being, and finally does not such an ambiguity arise out of the failure to take the Incarnation with all due seriousness?

Chapter IX.

Calvin's Understanding of Baptism[1]

1. In reading this chapter, my debt to the material collected by R. S. Wallace in his Calvin's Doctrine of Word and Sacrament will be particularly apparent.

After considering Calvin's doctrine of predestination, our next step is to examine his teaching on Baptism to consider how far this is in agreement with or conflicts with his understanding of the former subject. Before, however, Calvin's doctrine of baptism can be profitably discussed, it is first necessary to have an outline of his general understanding of the sacraments.

In the "Institutio", Calvin defines a sacrament as follows:

> externum esse symbolum, quo benevolentiae erga nos suae promissionies conscientiis nostris Dominus obsignat, ad sustinendam fidei nostrae imbecillitatem, et nos vicissim pietatem erga eum nostram tam coram eo et angelis quam apud homines testamur.[1]

Thus a sacrament is first and foremost an external sealing of God's promises to us, and secondly a testimony on our part of our piety. Before, however, we can understand the first part of the definition, we shall have to consider on a wider scale Calvin's view of the divine signs given to seal God's promises. It is the way of God to use signs to confirm the promises to those to whom they were made; the Tree of Life in the garden of Eden was the sign of God's grace to Adam, though it did not possess an intrinsic efficacy in its own right.[2] Likewise, the rainbow after the Flood was no new phenomenon, but was chosen by God as the physical sign to confirm His promise to Noah.[3]

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1. Inst. IV. 14. 1. II. c. 942.

2. Com. Gen. 3. 22. XXIII. c. 79.

3. Com. Gen. 9. 13. XXIII. c. 149.

Neither need such seals be physical objects as dramatic actions can take their place; Seraiah's action in binding a stone to the prophetic roll and casting it into the middle of the Euphrates is described by Calvin as a temporary sacrament.[1] Most of the miracles of the Old and New Testaments were signs used to seal doctrine[2] just as Jesus' own miracles were signs to confirm His own teaching[3], and in this they possessed the same end for which Baptism and the Lord's Supper are ordained today.[4]

These signs are given because of our ignorance and infirmity not so much to confirm God's promises but to establish our faith in them.[5] We ought in fact to lament that the truth of God needs such assistance because of the weakness of our flesh[6]; nevertheless, because God allows Himself to be handled in these signs men have no excuse when they fail to find Him by their senses.[7] As we have seen before, Calvin was insistent that there was no real change in the matter of the salvation

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1. Com. Jer. 51. 60-64. XXXIX. c. 501.
2. Com. Heb. 2. 4. LV. c. 22f.
3. Com. Acts 1. 1. XLVIII. c. 1f.
4. Com. Isaiah 7. 12. XXXVI. c. 153.
5. Inst. 4. 14. 3. II. c. 943.
6. Com. Is. 7. 12. XXXVI. c. 152.
7. Com. Acts 17. 27. XLVIII. c. 415.

offered both to Israel and to the Church, only the administration under the one unchanging covenant was different.[1] The forms of the sacraments might be different, but the reality which they signified was the same.[2] In other words, the signs were variable according to the pleasure of God, but the Gospel was always one and the same.

As we would expect, therefore, the Gospel is the principal matter to which the sacraments are but secondary; the latter must only be judged in relation to the Gospel to which they are appendages.[3] At the same time, there was usually a certain congruency between the reality and the sign which represented it; the Spirit came upon the apostles as cloven tongues of fire, because the gospel was to spread through all tongues and possess the power of fire.[4] Yet God gives us no more by visible signs than by His Word, but He gives it us in a different manner because we need a variety of helps for our weakness.[5] The sign is far from being essential for our sanctification; it only gives more fully what we already receive by faith in the Gospel without any external aid.[6] Isaiah could have been cleansed

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1. Com. Je. 31. 31-32. XXXVIII. c. 687ff.
2. Com. Ps. 50. 14, 15. XXXI. c. 502.
3. Com. 2 Cor. 5. 19. L. c. 72.
4. Com. Acts. 2. 3. XLVIII. c. 27.
5. True Partaking of the Blood of Christ. IX. c. 461.
6. Ibid. IX. c. 490.

without the use of the coal from off the altar, but that sign was useful to Isaiah as a proof and confirmation of the act.[1]

This distinction between the sign and the reality which it represents brings into discussion the whole question of the sacramental use of language. Calvin is well aware of this problem; in discussing the passage where it said that the Lord went before the Israelites in the pillar of cloud, he says we must pay attention to the sacramental mode of speaking, whereby God transfers His name to visible things, but does not allow them to include His essence and enclose His infinity. Rather we must think of the Divine presence being conjoined to these objects.[2] In discussing the coming of God in the cloud to the tabernacle, Calvin points out that this did not mean that God Who fills heaven and earth altered in any way His position, but that the cloud represented to men His presence with Moses. It was not just an empty sign, but the visible symbol of God's meeting with Moses.[3] Thus arises Calvin's distinction between "alligare" and"coniungere":

> Nam qui sacramentum fingit sibi efficientem aut materialem salutis causa, vel qui necessarium esse ita putat, ut sine ipso nec gratia nec salus, vel qui perpetuo annexam illi esse gratiae perceptionem

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1. Com. Is. 6. 7. XXXVI. c. 133.

2. Com. Ex. 13. 21. XXIV. c. 145.

3. Com. Ex. 34. 5. XXV. c. 113.

> tradit, is demum gratiam alligat sacramentis. Quin autem aliqua sit coniunctio, non video cur negemus.[1]

In regard to the sacraments, it is necessary for us to distinguish between the "res" and the "signum", so that while we embrace the sign, we yet give due honour to Christ and to the Holy Spirit.[2] At the same time, Calvin also affirms that the reality is held out to us along with the sign - from which it must be never separated but certainly distinguished.[3] A defender of Calvin could here draw attention to the similarity between his sacramental doctrine and orthodox Chalcedonian Christology - just as the two natures in Christ must be distinguished but not separated, so must the "res" be distinguished, but not separated from the "signum" in the sacrament. Is not then the Calvinist doctrine of the sacraments the logical outcome of orthodox Christology? At first sight, this may seem to be the case, but we must notice that Calvin never seems to think of the "coniunctio" between "res" and "signum" as more than some form of juxtaposition. The "res" in His salvific mission can work independently of the "signum"; there is no hypostatic union between the two. The relationship between the two is rather adoptionist and occasional than hypostatic. As I think, we shall see later, Calvin's

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1. "Calvini responsio ad annotationes Bullingiri scripta mense Ianuario 1549" 1. VII. c. 701.

2. Com. I Pe. 3. 21. LV. c. 268f.

3. Com. Is. 6. 7. XXXVI. c. 133.

sacramental theology is rather Nestorian than Chalcedonian.

The aim of the sacraments is to point away from themselves so as to assist us in seeking God spiritually in His heavenly glory.[1] In order to consider how this is achieved, we must now study their relationship to the Word, the Holy Spirit and faith. According to Calvin, sacraments are related to the Word in two particular ways. In the first place, they come into existence as sacraments because of the command of God - this is why Calvin restricts the sacraments of the Church to two only: Baptism and the Lord's Supper.[2] In Old Testament times, the same criteria applied - the Tree of Life did not possess any efficacy of itself but because of the promise of God.[3] The offering of sacrifices did not of themselves expiate sin, but only because God had ordained them as the symbols through which the people could come before Him.[4] The water of baptism has no power of itself to purge away sin, but its efficacy consists in the command and promises of God.5 It is therefore through the Word of God that certain objects become signs and sacraments.

In the second place, however, it is the Word as doctrine

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1. Com. Ps. 9. 12. XXXI. c. 102.
2. Inst. 4. 19. 3. II. c. 1068.
3. Com. Gen. 3. 22. XXIII. c. 79.
4. Com. Lev. 4. 22. XXIV. c. 519.
5. Com. Ezek. 4. 1-3. XL. c. 104f.

and teaching which realizes the sacrament. Commenting on Moses reading the Law to the people before the covenant sacrifice, Calvin says that this action shows the true nature and proper use of the sacraments. It is the Word, not just muttered in some formula of consecration, but proclaimed in such a way as to occasion faith in men, which gives life to the sacraments.[1] It is the doctrine which alone makes sacraments, and the fault of the Papists is that they lay doctrine on one side, and thus convert the sacraments into empty ceremonies.[2] Though our salvation has been performed in the flesh of Christ and is sealed to us through the sacraments, yet it is necessary that we obtain our certainty from faith in His Word.[3] The task in fact of the sacrament is to make the word visible[4], for it is only as such that our earthly natures can receive it fully. The man therefore, who professes to rely upon the promise alone, really tramples upon the blood of Christ.[5]

Yet when all this is said, Calvin would argue that the Word alone is insufficient to make the sacrament efficacious. Before the sacrament can become effective, it is necessary for

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1. Com. Ex. 24. 5. XXV. c. 75.
2. Com. Is. 20. 2. XXXVI. c. 351; cf. Com. Acts 13. 24. XLVIII. c. 293.
3. Com. Mt. 8. 10. XLV. c. 237.
4. Calvini Responsio 7. VII. c. 703f.
5. Com. Gen. 17. 14. XXIII. c. 244.

God when He speaks through His ministers to add the power of the Spirit. Whatever God offers us in the sacraments depends upon the secret working of the Spirit, and this activity appears in the elect alone.[1] The author of the remission of sins is the Father, the material cause the blood of Christ, while the Holy Spirit is the chief formal cause. Added to the action of the Spirit, there are, however, the inferior instruments of the word and baptism.[2] As Calvin concisely says concerning this relationship: "Spiritus auctor est, sacramentum vero instrumentum quo utitur."[3] God can, however, bestow the same gifts without the use of the sign if He so pleases, and while the sign can be given to good and bad alike, the reality depends upon the Spirit alone, Who bestows it solely upon the elect.[4] At the same time, Calvin insists that the reality is always annexed to the sacrament because God offers nothing deceitfully.[5] Yet if the Spirit is not present, the gifts in the sacraments are but as light falling on the eyeballs of the blind or sounds on the ear-drums of the dear.[6] The lawful order for adults is that no

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1. Com. Dt. 30. 6. XXV. c. 54f.; Ep. 1039. XII. c. 729f.
2. Com. Acts 22. 16. XLVIII. c. 496.
3. Calv. Resp. 2. VII. c. 702.
4. Com. Eph. 5. 26. LI. c. 223.
5. Com. Acts 22. 16. XLVIII. c. 497
6. Inst. 4. 14. 9. II. c. 947.

minister should admit them to the sign of baptism until God has testified them to be His children by the pledge of His Spirit.[1] Men ought to seek from God the grace of His Spirit, so that while possessing the sign, they may not be destitute of the reality of baptism.[2] Thus we can see, that according to Calvin the sacraments are made effective through the Spirit, yet do not in any way confer Him. Men must look for salvation from Christ's hand alone, and whoever turns aside even a little from the Spirit to trust the signs is falling short in faith.[3]

In considering the relationship of the sacraments to the Holy Spirit, we have been trying to observe their realization from an objective point of view; now we turn to the subjective counter-part to the work of the Holy Spirit - faith. By the work of the Holy Spirit the elect are illuminated unto faith so that they receive the benefits of the sacraments.[4] Man cannot set the sacramental operation into action by performance of the outward rite - all he can do is to call upon God with true faith.[5] We shall not enter into the presence of God in the sacraments if we do not have faith[6], which, in fact, accomplishes everything in

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1. Com. Acts 10. 47. XLVIII. c. 252.
2. Com. Je. 4. 4. XXXVII. c. 578.
3. Com. Acts 11. 16. XLVIII. c. 256.
4. Mutual Consent 16. VII. c. 740.
5. Com. Is. 1. 11. XXXVI. c. 391.
6. Com. Acts 7. 49. XLVIII. c. 161.

regard to the sacraments.[1] Though, as we have seen, Calvin lays a great deal of stress upon the necessity of the sacrament being brought into close relationship with the Word in order to be effective, yet he quotes Augustine with approval that it is not the Word as uttered which is of importance, but the Word as believed.[2] Baptism without faith is a profanation of the sacrament[3] and though a sacrament will always retain its power, we do not gain its fruit except by faith.[4] Nevertheless, though the sacraments are only effective on the condition of faith, yet when they are properly received, they also increase and confirm faith in turn.[5] This is perfectly logical on Calvin's part, as he insists that it is not necessary that a sacrament should be received with perfect faith in order to be efficacious.

Throughout his theology, Calvin lays great stress on the necessity of our being united with Christ's "life-giving flesh" - with the salvation which He has effected for us in His historical activity. Redemption is only ours, if we enter into true communion with Christ.[6] The closeness of this union is revealed to us by the sacraments, showing us that our souls should feed on

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1. Com. Ro. 4. 12. XLIX. c. 76.
2. Inst. 4. 14. 7. II. c. 946.
3. Com. Acts 8. 36. XLVIII. c. 196.
4. 2nd Serm. on Ascension XLVIII. c. 601.
5. Mutual Consent 19. VII. c. 741. Cf. Com. Gen. 9. 12. XXXIII. c.149.
6. Inst. 4. 17. 1. II. c. 1002.

Christ, just as our bodies are supported physically by bread and wine.[1] Calvin rejects the contention of Westphal that the Eucharist was instituted so that we might receive the body of Christ under the bread, while in Baptism, we were washed in the triune Name; indeed, we put on Christ no less in Baptism than in the Lord's Supper.[2] It is this stress that we are incorporated into the fullness of Christ in baptism, that leads Calvin so strongly to reject the idea that we gain any further graces of the Spirit through confirmation.[3] Our salvation has been accomplished in the flesh of Christ, which is sealed to us by the sacraments.

In order to ensure the intimacy of this union with us, Christ consecrated Baptism in His own Body for us[4]; one of the reasons why Calvin will allow no distinction between John's baptism and that administered by the Apostles is that if the former is not valid, Christ did not share the same baptism with us.[5] Moreover, Christ does not just baptize us with the Spirit, but rather we must regard even the external rite of the sacrament as if administered by Christ Himself. Christ did not administer

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1. Inst. 4. 17. 1. II. c. 1002f.
2. Last admon. IX. c. 216.
3. Inst. 4. 19. 8. II. c. 1072f.
4. Com. Acts 19. 5. XLVIII. c. 441f.; Com. Mt. 3. 13-17. XLV. c. 124ff.
5. Com. Mt. 3. 11-12. XLV. c. 121f.

baptism in His earthly ministry so as to show that the human ministrant of the sacrament did not matter, but that in every instance Christ Himself baptised.[1] All the New Testament titles for baptism only refer to what Christ does in the sacrament.[2] We must beware of placing any of our confidence upon the element or the minister, for the sacraments should so lead us to Christ that we place all our reliance on Him.[3]

Baptism is our entrance into the Church and the symbol of our engrafting into Christ.[4] The two ideas are so closely connected in Calvin's thought, that it has been argued that they are synonymous, and any rate it is generally extremely difficult to distinguish between the two notions in any one passage.[5]

The sign of washing marks our initiation into the Church - thus Baptism confers forgiveness of sins.[6] This forgiveness is received, because by Baptism we are called into Christ - where we are both made clean by His blood, and also enter into a new life because of His resurrection and death.[7] In baptism, not

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1. Com. Jn. 4. 2. XLVII. 77f.
2. Com. Acts 1. 5. XLVIII. c. 7.
3. Com. Eph. 5. 26. LI. c. 223.
4. Com. Tit. 3. 5. LII. c. 430.
5. See discussion of this point in Wallace, op. cit., p.154f.
6. Inst. 4. 1. 20. II. c. 762.
7. Com. Acts 2. 38. XLVIII. c. 54.

only are our past sins expunged, but we receive a forgiveness which covers our future sins as well.[1] In one passage, Calvin compares baptism to the Old Testament sacrifices because as these sacrifices covered sins, so does baptism wash them away. Baptism, however, sets forth Christ as present, while the sacrifices only typified Him - but it is noteworthy that both ordinances point to His death.[2] On other occasions, however, he rather compares baptism to circumcision.[3] Nevertheless, there is no "opus operatum" working in the conferring of the sacrament, which is only profitable where God pleases.[4] At the same time, however, Calvin unlike Augustine can speak of perseverence being given to all those whose sins are pardoned.[5] Thus Calvin denies the possibility, allowed by Augustine that a man may receive the gift of forgiveness in baptism, and yet be denied the further grace of perseverance.

In the Genevan Confession of 1536, Calvin defines baptism as consisting of two parts - forgiveness and mortification. This latter, like the former also arises out of our incorporation into Christ; if we are to share in the fellowship of His death,

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1. Inst. 4. 15. 3. II. c. 963.
2. Com. Lev. 4. 22. XXIV. c. 519.
3. Com. Dt. 30. 6. XXV. c. 54.
4. Com. Acts 22. 16. XLVIII. c. 497.
5. Com. Dt. 30. 6. XXV. c. 54.

it means not only the washing away of sin, but the putting to death and dying of the old man.[1] As Calvin graphically puts it - we are baptized so that the Cross might be fitted to our shoulders.[2]

Our renovation, however, consists of two parts - mortification in which we share in the death of Christ, and "vivificatio" as we partake of His Resurrection.[3] We need therefore the interposition of the Holy Spirit so that we might be made into new creatures, but this grace of the Spirit just as the mercy of the Father we receive through Christ.[4] Calvin is emphatic that we receive the fullness of the Spirit through baptism. In discussing the post-baptismal laying-on of hands upon the Samaritans in Acts 8, he will only allow that the Samaritans received by this the special powers of the Spirit granted to the Church in the Apostolic Age and later completely withdrawn, for the Spirit of adoption they had received in baptism itself.[5] On the other hand, Calvin will not restrict the moment of regeneration to the time of receiving the sign - some who are baptized as infants God regenerates in childhood, adolescence, or even in old age.[6] Calvin amends the

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1. Com. Ro. 6. 3. XLIX. c. 105.
2. Com. Mt. 20. 22. XLV. c. 554.
3. Com. Ro. 6. 5. XLIX. c. 106f.; Com. I Pe. 4. 2. LV. c. 271.
4. Com. I Cor. 1. 13. XLIX. c. 318.
5. Com. Acts 8. 15, 16. XLVIII. c. 182f.
6. Mutual Consensus 20. VII. c. 741.

bold "ergo qui baptismum recepit, simul peccatorum remissionem percepit" of the first series of Propositions on Baptism, explaining later that "simul" must be interpreted as "similiter".[1]

The second part of the definition of Baptism which Calvin gives in his "Institutio" refers to the sacrament as a sign of confession among men. As one would expect, this idea does not play a very important role in Calvin's sacramental thought. He declares it to be foolishness to think of the sacrament just as a mark of outward separation instead of mutual and reciprocal signs.[2] This side of the definition of the sacrament, one feels, is so unimportant to Calvin that it appears he only mentions so as to be as all-inclusive as possible. His main attitude in regard to it is to warn people against making this secondary matter first when thinking of the Sacraments.[3]

As we should expect, Calvin rejects in its entirety the Roman idea of Baptism being sacramentally effective "ex opere operato". Calvin criticizes the idea of the sacraments being efficacious "ex opere operato" on the ground that it presupposes that men can merit the grace of God, while in reality we can do nothing more than present ourselves in faith to God to receive His grace.[4] The emphasis must be placed on the free action of God,

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1. Calv. resp. 9. VII. c. 704.

2. Com. Ezek. 20. 12. XL. c. 485f.

3. Inst. 4. 14. 13. II. c. 951.

4. Com. Gal. 5. 3. L. c. 245.

not upon the performance by men of the outward act.[1] The root fault of the Roman attitude, according to Calvin, is that they transfer to the sign what really belongs to the promise.[2] As we have seen before, he held that there was a "coniunctio" between the "signum" and the "res", but no "alligatio". It was because of this that he could argue that the sacramental efficacy need not take place at the time of the administration of the rite. Discussing Simon Magnus, he argues that it is evident that he did not receive the baptismal gift with the rite, yet if as some believe, conversion followed afterwards, it would be then that the sacrament would begin to reveal its power.[3] In this total denial of the "opus operatum", Calvin had to face the fact that there was a certain amount of Biblical evidence against his view - such passages as John 3:5, Gal. 3:27, and Titus 3:5. Concerning the first of these texts Calvin takes the line that the passage does not deal with baptism at all - the phrase "of water and of Spirit" being a form of Semitic parallelism, equivalent to "with the Holy Spirit and with fire" of Mt. 3:11 - fire and water both being regarded as parallelism for the Holy Spirit. Regarding the other two texts, Calvin takes away their force by saying that the people addressed on each occasion were believers who had put on Christ

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1. Com. Is. 1. 11. XXXVI. c. 39f.

2. Calv. Resp. 1. VII. c. 701.

3. Com. Acts 8. 13. XLVIII. c. 180.

in baptism, and to whom the rite had been the bath of regeneration.[1] One has the feeling that Calvin is not doing justice to the sense of these texts and that their meaning has been moulded to fit in with some pre-conceived scheme. This is the danger of all Biblical exegesis along the lines of the "analogia fidei"; if one posits a unity to the Biblical revelation, there is the hazard that one will impose a premature unity on passages of diverging import.

How far then does Calvin regard the sacrament of Baptism as being necessary to salvation? In the first place he will not allow the salvation of the soul to be so attached to the sign as to make the Divine promise alone insufficient.[2] By faith alone, without any external action, we can receive cleansing by the blood of Christ and regeneration by the Spirit; the sign is added to confirm these gifts, and also so that we may receive them more fully.[3] Calvin does not describe in what this extra received through the sacraments consists, but I think that we shall not be doing injustice to his thought in interpreting it in terms of a greater clarity and sureness of faith because the gift has been confirmed to us by a visible symbol. In any case, the sacrament is not added to faith as half the cause of salvation but rather as

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1. See Calvin's exegesis of these three passages in his commentaries.
2. Appendix to True Method of Reforming the Church, VII. c. 677.
3. True Partaking, IX. c. 490.

a testimony to faith.[1] Calvin discusses the case of a youth, properly instructed in, and accepting the Christian faith, who dies before the day of his baptism; is it to be thought that he will not be saved, especially when the Scripture affirms that he who believes has passed from death unto life? Such a case, however, his Roman opponents would also allow - the idea of "baptism by desire" at least going as far back as Ambrose. Calvin, in discussing how far baptism is necessary for salvation, makes a great deal of the fact that Abraham received the covenant-promise from God before he was circumcised. The fact that this happened shows that at the very beginning God wished to give an example to ensure that no-one might assign salvation to external signs.[3]

In contrast, however, to this trend in his thought, Calvin laid very strong emphasis on belonging to the Church; we could enjoy no hope of safety if we were cut off from God's flock.[4] People who possessed no form of the Church, no sacraments and no administration of the Word ought to look upon themselves as in some way cast out of the presence of God, and ought to pray earnestly for the restoration of the Church.[5] To rely on the bare promise

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1. Com. Mk. 16. 16. XLV. c. 824.
2. Inst. 4. 16. 26. II. c. 994f.
3. Com. Ro. 4. 11. XLIX. c. 74f.
4. Com. Ezek. 13. 9. XL. c. 281.
5. Com. Is. 48. 19. XXXVII. c. 187.

and to neglect baptism is to trample on the blood of Christ, for this severance of sign and word violates the Covenant.[1] We can thus sum up Calvin's position on this matter: Baptism is normally necessary to salvation, for by it one is incorporated into the Church, the body with which God has made His covenant. To despise baptism by neglect is at the same time to reject the covenant, and thus to cut off oneself from salvation. At the same time, the grace of God is not limited in its action to the sacraments, so that in "cases of emergency" people can be regenerated without their aid.

In line with this covenant-necessity of the sacraments, Calvin has strong views on their administration and validity. He is completely anti-Donatist in denying that the grace of the sacrament depends upon the sanctity or status of him who administers it. The fact that Moses, who is not a priest, ordains Aaron to be one on the command of God shows that sacraments gain their power not from the minister but from the Divine ordinance.[2] Baptism is in no way affected by the character of men who administer it - it would be still an unchangeable and sacred testimony of the grace of God even if it were administered by the devil.[3] One of his arguments against any differentiation between the baptism

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1. Com. Gen. 17. 14. XXXIII. c. 244.

2. Com. Ex. 28. 1. XXIV. c. 428.

3. Com. Amos 5. 25-6. XLIII. c. 98.

of John and that of Christ, is that if such a distinction were made, it would presume that the Holy Spirit was in the gift of the minister.[1] Because baptism is in the Triune Name we are baptized into fellowship with Christ, not into the ignorance or weakness of those who might baptize us.[2] The fact of baptism witnesses that the Church still exists even among the Romans, though they are the sworn enemies of God - and their baptism does not need renewing on conversion to the Reformed faith.[3] The children of Roman Catholics are not in fact to be regarded as strangers - for even if they were not born of a holy father or mother, yet the promise of God extends to a thousand generations.[4]

At the same time, Calvin insists that baptism should only be administered by duly ordained ministers of the Gospel, and that any administration by midwives or other unauthorized persons is sheer usurpation.[5] Because Calvin does not believe that infants dying without the benefit of baptism are necessarily damned, he is able to insist on a more strict observance of Church order than his Roman and Lutheran opponents. Calvin never informs us whether he would regard such unauthorized baptism as invalid, but

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1. Com. Mt. 3. 11-12. XLV. c. 122f.
2. Inst. 4. 15. 6. II. c. 965.
3. Com. Ezek. 16. 20. XL. c. 354.
4. App. to True Method. VII. 680f.
5. Inst. 4. 15. 20. II. c. 974; 2nd d. a. Westphal IX. c. 101.

from his general position it would appear that he would admit their validity (which would also mean their possible efficacy), but would regard such a proceeding as being highly irregular. At the same time, Calvin would appear to deny that a person who had received the sacrament of baptism without either personal faith or belonging by birth to the Church had been truly baptized. He reminds Westphal that we must not administer the sacraments to everyone, but dispense them according to the rule ordained by God.[1]

After having considered Calvin's general doctrine of baptism, our next task is to see how this fits the special circumstances implied by the practice of infant baptism which he upheld. We can only approach God according to Calvin by means of reconciliation, and yet Christ gathered the children to Him and presented them to the Father; how could He do this without giving them purity? It follows then that these children must have been renewed by the Spirit of God; if that is the case, what is there to prevent them receiving the seal of renovation, i.e. baptism? To deny baptism to children was also to deny to them the right of redemption, as they could in no way approach the Father unless they shared in the reconciliation effected by Christ. If they shared in this reconciliation, there was no reason why they should not receive its sign.[2]

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1. 2nd Def. a. Westphal. IX. c. 115.

2. Com. Mt. 19. 14. XLV. c. 535f. Cf. Inst. 4. 16. 7. II. c. 980f.

This argument, we can see, presupposes the doctrine of original sin - that children from their birth are liable to the judgment of God. This Calvin fully accepts, but criticizes those who would affirm that baptism restores man to the state of primeval purity. Rather baptism delivers us from the guilt which was imputed to us, and from the penalty for that guilt, though the corruption of original sin will still be a force in our experience throughout this mortal life. For Calvin as for Augustine, deliverance from original sin by baptism is primarily a question of imputation.[1]

Yet baptism is not simply a change of status in the eyes of God without any corresponding moral distinction, for the interior power of baptism is renovation.[2] But how is it possible that infants having no sense of right or wrong can be regenerated? The fact, argues Calvin, is that they must, otherwise they cannot be saved at all - for Scripture states that there is no hope of salvation for them outside of Christ. Therefore they must be regenerated by Him, though it is beyond our capacity to understand how this can be done.[3] In another passage Calvin declares that infants are renewed by the Spirit of God according to the capacity of their age, so that the power which was given to them at baptism

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1. Inst. 4. 15. 10. II. c. 967.

2. Com. Je. 9. 26. XXXVIII. c. 56.

3. Inst. 4. 16. 17/18. II. c. 988f.

grows within them until it is completely manifest at the proper time.[1] In another place, he says that the grace of the Spirit follows after baptism in infants[2], though he will not deny that some infants may be regenerated as soon as the outward action is performed.[3] Children are baptized for future repentance and faith, the seeds of which already lie hidden within them because of the secret operation of the Holy Spirit.[4] Beckmann has noted that in the first edition of the Institutes Calvin, following Luther, speaks of the beginning of faith even in infants, but that in the later editions of the "Institutio" Calvin refers rather to the work of the Holy Spirit.[5] As we have seen before, according to Calvin's account of regeneration, faith is but the subjective counterpart of the work of the Holy Spirit - the only distinction between faith and the Holy Spirit is whether one approaches the subject from the Godward or manward side. Calvin no doubt felt that because of the non-personal existence of the infant, it is stretching the definition of faith too far to say that an infant could possess such a quality, and that it was better to speak of

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1. Com. Mt. 19. 14. XLV. c. 535.
2. Com. Acts 10. 47. XLVIII. c. 252.
3. 2nd Def. a. Westphal. IX. c. 118.
4. Inst. 4. 16. 20. II. c. 990.
5. Vom Sakrament bei Calvin, p.97. Cf. Inst. I. c. 117/8 (C.R.I) and Inst. (1539) 17. 35-41. (I. c. 979ff.).

the seeds of faith being planted at that time by the Holy Spirit within the infant. Calvin, however, on occasion feels it necessary to enter the caveat that it is not the rite of baptism which regenerates infants, but the promise - for the action only seals the salvation of which they were already partakers.[1]

Thus children are not made sons of God by baptism, rather the Church admits to the sacrament because they are heirs of adoption. It is by the promise that they are saved - and this promise will avail for their salvation so long as their parents are not negligent or contumacious in bringing their child to the sacrament.[2] If, in Israel, an uncircumcised child died before the eighth day, he would be saved, for the promise would avail for salvation.[3] At the same time, there is no reason for believing that Calvin held that all unbaptized children who died in infancy would be saved. Salvation whether of adults or of infants depended upon the promise, and infants in fact could only legitimately be baptized because God had covenanted with their parents that He would be their God and the God of their seed also. True, Calvin would stress that this promise lasted even to a thousand generations yet there is no reason for thinking that he believed that an

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1. 2nd Def. a. Westphal. IX. c. 101.

2. Articles of the Faculty of Sacred Theology of Paris with Antidote I. VII. c. 3f.

3. Com. Gen. 17. 14. XXIII. c. 243.

unbaptized infant of heathen parents or descent would be saved - as that child would be completely outside the covenant. Wallace in a footnote quotes from Calvin's commentary on Mt. 19:14 the phrase: "To exclude from the grace of redemption those of that age would be too cruel" against the view that Calvin consigned helpless infants to eternal damnation.[1] This interpretation, however, is based on a misunderstanding of Calvin's argument in this passage. He is maintaining that one cannot be saved unless one partakes of the redemption in Christ - therefore if infants cannot partake of this redemption, they cannot be saved. If, however, they can partake of this redemption, there is no reason why they should not receive the sign of baptism. Therefore, for the Anabaptists to deny to them the sign of baptism is equal to denying them the possibility of redemption. Surely then, to deny baptism to children is also logically to deny them the possibility of salvation. The argument really concerns the possibility of children partaking of the redemption in Christ, and should certainly never be developed to indicate that Calvin believed all children dying in infancy would be saved. For Calvin, possession of the promise is equally necessary for the salvation of infants as was, according to Augustine, the rite of baptism.

We have seen earlier how Calvin held strongly to the unity

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1. Op. cit., p.196 note 2.

of the Church and Israel in the one salvation of Christ - the covenant was one, only the outward administration was different. In Israel, children as well as adults were equally bound by the covenant; the child had received circumcision, the token of adoption, and when it came of age should show gratitude that it had inherited a part in God's family. What applied in Israel, Calvin argued, should equally stand in the Church; men accept the right that slavery is passed on by inheritance, why should they not allow the same right to God?[1] God makes His covenant with us through the sacraments[2], therefore children as members by birth of the covenant people have a right to these. The covenant in fact by its very nature implies a family consecration, for God adopts us that He may be the Father of our seed.[3] Both circumcision and baptism symbolize the same things, forgiveness and mortification, therefore the children of Christian parents have a right to the latter sacrament.[4]

We can see how this conception fits in perfectly with Calvin's view of the visible Church and Israel as a "medium quiddam" - the larger sphere of God's electing grace, which opens a further door for the election of some individuals to salvation. Calvin's

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1. Com. Dt. 29. 10. XXV. c. 48.
2. Com. Acts 7. 8. XLVIII. c. 135.
3. Com. Acts 8. 12. XLVIII. c. 179.
4. Inst. 4. 16. 3. II. c. 977f.

achievement in fact in relation to the doctrine of baptism is to bring that sacrament into real contact with the doctrine of election in its wider sphere, i.e. as relating to the community of election rather than in relation to the elect individual.

We have seen earlier that in regard to infant baptism, Calvin dispensed with the necessity of faith in order that the sacrament should be rightly received - a stipulation which everywhere else he insists upon. At the same time, faith does play a part even in regards to infant baptism - the stress being laid not upon the personal faith of the infant, but upon the corporate faith of the covenant-community. As Abraham's faith was of advantage to his posterity, so by the faith of believers, the grace of God is extended to their children.[1] By baptism, children are truly made heirs of the covenant, though unfortunately many of them later exclude themselves through unbelief.[2] Nevertheless, though the common election may not be effectual in all, still it opens the gate for the special elect.[3]

Our survey, I believe, has shown us that Calvin had a clear idea of what was done by the sacrament of baptism. His conception is clear - far more definite in fact than that of Augustine - possibly because Calvin could start afresh in his systematization

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1. Com. Mt. 9. 2. XLV. c. 244.

2. Com. Ezek. 16. 21. XL. c. 355.

3. Com. Acts 3. 25. XLVIII. c. 76.

of the doctrine, and did not have to take traditional material and its emphases so seriously. The strength of his position like that of Augustine, was that baptism was thoroughly integrated into the Christian life - it was a facet in the great complex of Christian existence, and outside its connection with the other facets in this complex possessed no real significance of its own. At the same time, just because of that baptism scarcely possessed any objective significance, one could never imagine Calvin saying like Luther in times of depression: "baptizatus sum". In the end, what was really saving about baptism was one's faith in what it signified, if one accepted it with faith. Here is to be found, in Calvin himself, the roots of the subjectivity of the later Pietism and Evangelicalism.

It is true that Calvin placed the basis of our assurance in Christ Himself - but what was the seal of our assurance, baptism or our faith in baptism? In all probability, Calvin did not teach the "Syllogismus practicus" of the later Calvinism[1], but by his attitude on this matter of the sacraments, he made some such doctrine an experiential necessity. A further discussion of the significance of Calvin's sacramental teaching must be reserved until later, where the affinities of his thought with that of Augustine will be considered.

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1. For a thorough discussion on Calvin's teaching about the "Syllogismus practicus", see J. Piesel, The Theology of Calvin, pp.169-181.

Chapter X.

Calvin's Eschatological Teaching

In our chapter on the eschatology of St. Augustine, we drew attention to three aspects of his teaching in particular. In the first place, we saw how he tended to devalue the cosmic elements in the eschatological pattern of the early Church by completely re-interpreting the Millenial hope, treating it as the symbol of the Church's ambiguous position within history between the two Advents. Instead of stressing the restoration of the whole creation, the tendency was to centre eschatology upon the individual's destiny, and to maintain that the hour of death was the personal equivalent to the Last Day. Secondly, primarily owing to Augustine's philosophical background derived from the Platonic tradition, he failed to give time any real status in its own right - it was just a mere flux as compared with eternity, in which was contained the "rationes" of all that was to happen. Finally, arising out of this basic attitude, Augustine failed to do justice to the New Testament idea of the overlap of the ages and to recognize the Church as the society in which the powers of the End were already at work in the preaching of the Word and the administration of the sacraments. He was unable to connect the historic mission of our Lord in any significant way to the growth within history of the City of God. Though the saving activity of God took place within the realm of the Church, that saving activity was in no way committed to the historic manifestations of the Church's life. There was no "hypostatic" unity between time and eternity within history. We met the same basic

tension as we had already noticed in our consideration of St. Augustine's teaching on Predestination and Baptism.

We have now to ask the further question as to whether a similar tension is also found when we compare Calvin's eschatological teaching with that on baptism and predestination. In making this study, certain factors must be borne in mind. It would not be unjust to award Calvin the title of the greatest theological Biblical commentator who has ever been given to the Church. Only the Apocalypse in the New Testament and Judges, Kings, Chronicles and the Wisdom Literature in the Old failed to receive a commentary from his pen - and it must be remembered that we have expository sermons extant by Calvin upon even some of these omissions. Such extensive exposition made it hard for Calvin, even if he had wished, to evade the richness of the Biblical message. He was compelled by his task and his theology to give a fair exposition of any passage of the Scriptures, which he came across in the book upon which he was commenting. Because of this, it would be surprising in the extreme, if at least on the surface we found Calvin extremely"Biblical" in his eschatological outlook. It is harder to discover which sections of the complex of eschatological teaching in the Bible he tended to stress, particularly in the building-up of his theology.

Moreover, we can see good reasons why Calvin would tend to be chary in dealing with certain elements in the Christian eschatological picture except in the broadest outline, and perhaps on

occasion even in a negative sense. On the one hand, he had to combat the speculative eschatological views of the Roman Catholics especially in regard to the doctrine of purgatory. Is not the reason why we seem to detect a certain tentativeness in Calvin's thought in "Psychopannychia" about the destiny of the soul between death and the Resurrection due to the fact that after having rejected the doctrine of purgatory, he had very little theological tradition to guide him in his task of reconstruction? On the other hand, he was compelled to combat the chiliastic views of certain elements among the Anabaptists, whose eyes were so set upon the future that they adopted an irresponsible attitude towards the present. This conflict would always be a temptation to Calvin to devalue the cosmic elements within the Christian hope.

Yet in spite of these inducements, Calvin does not try to evade the eschatology inherent in the Christian faith. He stated quite categorically that the doctrine of the Last Things belonged to the highest mysteries of the Christian faith[1], and we can see that for him hope was as co-essential as faith for salvation. It is only by hope that faith is undergirded, and given patience to endure the trials of this life.[2] Moreover, Calvin's attitude towards the future was one of joy, expectation of resurrection rather than the fear of judgment. The Medieval fear, even for

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1. Com. Heb. 6. 1. LV. c. 68.

2. Inst. III. 2. 42. II. c. 432f.

the believer of Christ as judge is missing from Calvin's thought; in fact, he states that judgment has been committed by the Father to the Son so that the consciences of His people might not be alarmed for the Last Day.[1]

Yet though the Last Day is to be looked forward to without fear, Calvin does not encourage speculation as to when that Day will arrive - such discussions from prophecy concerning the time are not for pious believers.[2] Calvin saw rightly that calculation and expectancy in regard to the Last Day were two attitudes exclusive of each other, and that as the new age had already begun with the Coming of Christ, the Last Day must be expected at any time.[3] In principle, Calvin rejects the idea that the End is determined by any signs concerning which men may calculate[4], though certain provisos must be added to this general statement. In the first place, Calvin insists that before Christ returns, the Gospel must be carried to the utmost parts of the world[5], and it is significant that in this respect he interprets in 2 Thess. 2:6 as being the Gospel.[6] Secondly, he can also state

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1. Inst. II. 16. 18. II. c. 384.
2. Com. I Thess. 5. 1. LII. c. 168.
3. Com. I Cor. 15. 52. XLIX. c. 562.
4. Com. I Thess. 5. 2. LII. c. 168.
5. Com. Mt. 24. 14. XLV. c. 656.
6. Com. 2 Thess. 2. 6. LII. c. 200.

that the Coming of Christ will be preceded by a great ravaging of the Church.[1] On the other hand, neither of these two "signs" can really be used as a basis for calculating the time of the End. In fact, Calvin, in his exegesis, endeavours to take away this property from the most apocalyptic signs in the Bible - even those outlined in the "Little Apocalypse" must not be connected immediately with the End, for the Church long ago experienced the fulfilment of those predictions.[2] Apocalyptic signs point not so much to the imminence of the End, but are rather generalized descriptions of the Church between the ages.

It is in line with this manner of interpretation that Calvin expounds his view concerning Antichrist. He does not conceive of any single person as being Antichrist, but rather thinks that the name is a generic term for the spiritual kingdom of evil which stands in constant opposition to the Gospel.[3] Basing his thought on I Jn. 2:18, he argues that heresies representing the work of Antichrist are the sign that since the first Advent of Christ the Church has been living in the Last Days.[4] Once again an apocalyptic symbol is used to represent an aspect of the Church's continual position within history. At the same time

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1. Com. I Cor. 15. 52. XLIX. c. 562.
2. Com. Mt. 24. 14. XLV. c. 657.
3. Com. 2 Thess. 2. 3. LII. c. 196ff.
4. Loc. cit.

Calvin does seem to find room in his thought for a special manifestation of Antichrist at the End - as Satan is not unbound until all nations have had a chance of either accepting or rejecting the Gospel.[1] On this point, however, the thought of Calvin seems confused as he can speak of the Word of the Gospel dispersing the darkness of Antichrist, and in this respect Calvin seems to award to his own times an eschatological significance, as the Gospel preached by the Reformers is successfully engaged in overthrowing the darkness of the Papacy which embodies Antichrist.[2] We must not overstress this, however, as Calvin's language concerning the Reformation need not be interpreted as implying the temporal nearness of the End, but as describing any situation in Church history when the Gospel makes great headway against the powers of darkness entrenched against it. In general, we can say, however, that for Calvin Antichrist ceases to be an apocalyptic figure prefiguring the immediacy of the End, but rather it is incorporated into his philosophy of Church history, becoming in fact the rough equivalent of Augustine's "civitas diaboli".

We can view the same process of the "de-apocalyptization" of eschatological symbols in relation to Calvin's treatment of the

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1. Com. 2 Thess. 2. 6. LII. c. 200.

2. Com. 2 Thess. 2. 8. LII. c. 202. For Calvin's identification of Antichrist with the Papacy, cf. Ibid. 2. 4. LII. c. 199.

Millenium. This he interprets not as the eternal blessedness of the Church, but rather as the various troubles which she has to encounter in the world.[1] At the same time, we must note that in Calvin's treatment of the Millenium there is a surprising lack of polemic against the materialism often associated with the idea of the thousand-year reign of the saints with Christ upon the earth. His main charge against the Chiliasm of the sectaries was that it limited the reign of Christ to only a thousand years.[2] It is true that Calvin himself did not say very much concerning the cosmic nature of the Resurrection, but he does affirm that God will restore the world, now fallen with mankind into perfection, though he is very chary of entering into speculations concerning what this may mean.[3] Calvin not only takes over the Augustinian interpretation of the Millenium but also its corollary in the view that the First Resurrection is referred to regeneration while the Second Resurrection concerns the events of the Last Day.[4] Apocalyptic and Church history are once again integrated.

It would be unjust, however, to regard Calvin as an exponent of "realized" eschatology in the modern sense of the word. He compares some similar type of interpretation to the heresy of the

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1. Inst. III. xxv. 5. II. c. 734.
2. Com. I Thess. 4. 17. LII. c. 167.
3. Com. Ro. 8. 21. XLIX. c. 158.
4. Psychopannychia V. c. 198.

Corinthians attacked in I Cor. 15 by the Apostle, and refers to those in his own time who by imagining some kind of allegorical resurrection (sicuti isti allegoricam resurrectionem imaginando) take away from us the true resurrection which is promised.[1] Rather for Calvin, eschatology is "inaugurated" - the End time has begun, but Christian eyes still look towards the future for the fullness of their hope to be revealed. Yet as we have seen Calvin so interprets some of the principal eschatological symbols in relation to the continuing life of the Church, as almost to deliver them from any temporal locus. This is perhaps because Calvin believes that since the Resurrection of Christ and the giving of the Holy Spirit the Church has been living in the Last times.[2] Because Christ by His Advent had brought in the renovation of the world, it could be rightly called the extremity of days.[3] Commenting on Is. 65:17 "For, lo, I will create new heavens and a new earth", he argues that such exaggerated modes of expression are used for the greatness of the blessing revealed at Christ's first Coming, and not only for the period of that Coming, but for the whole reign of Christ from then until the Last Day.[4] Even in this present time the Church partakes of the glory of Christ,

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1. Com. I Cor. 15. 1. XLIX. c. 537.
2. Com. Acts 2. 17. XLVIII. c. 31.; Com. I Jn. 2. 18. LV. c. 321.
3. Com. Mic. 4. 1-2. XLIII. c. 339f.
4. Com. Is. 65. 17. XXXVII. c. 428.

because in a hidden way she is joined to Him.[1] Though the whole world has been renewed and restored to good order by the death of Christ[2], yet the Kingdom is not yet fully revealed until the Last Day, even if it is in some way manifested by the preaching of the Gospel.[3] It is noticeable that when Calvin speaks of the renovation brought by Christ at His first Advent, he is generally referring to the "renovatio mundi", and his language almost bears a cosmic accent.[4] It is perhaps because of this that Calvin in his concluding chapter of the "Institutio" concerning secular government can speak of the immortal and incorruptible blessedness which even starts for us within this mortal life.[5] If Calvin believed that to certain extent "secular" benefits had been given by the first Advent of Christ, he was perhaps justified in interpreting the Millenium as referring to the interim period of the Church's life. The heart of the belief, however, expressed by the symbol of the Millenium is that of the final perfection of God's reign upon earth, and Calvin never suggests that the present "interim age" of the Church approaches to this. This is clearly seen in his comment upon Mt. 19:28, where though he affirms

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1. Com. Eph. 2. 6. LI. c. 164.
2. Com. Jn. 13. 31. XLVII. c. 317.
3. Com. Mt. 19. 28. XLV. c. 544f.
4. Cf. Com. Heb. 7. 17. LV. c. 91; Com. Jn. 13. 31. XLVII. c. 317.
5. Inst. IV. xx. 2. II. c. 1093.

that the first Coming of Christ must be regarded as the regeneration, yet it is nevertheless necessary to distinguish between the beginning and the completion of Christ's reign.[1] On occasion, Calvin makes this distinction in another way using the Pauline metaphors of childhood and inheritance; we have the status of children and therefore the inheritance is really ours, though we shall only enter into possession of it in the future.[2]

Here we meet the typical emphasis of Calvin upon the Ascension of Christ - because Christ is now in Heaven we do not just possess a hope of heaven, but already in a manner sit in the heavenly places through Christ our Head.[3] It is because of the presence there of our ascended Lord that our minds must constantly be directed towards heaven.[4] Yet at the same time a tension still exists for the believer because we do not yet enjoy lordship over heaven and earth, as we are still imprisoned in the bondage of our mortal bodies.[5] This desire for the rest of the blessed in heaven is perhaps found best expressed in Calvin's thought in some of the prayers scattered among his commentaries and sermons. The most accessible example, however, of Calvin's passionate

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1. Com. Mt. 19. 28. XLV. c. 544f.
2. Com. Ro. 8. 17. XLIX. c. 150f.
3. Inst. II. xvi. 16. II. c. 383.
4. Com. Col. 3. 1. LII. c. 117f.
5. Com. I Jn. 3. 2f. LV. c. 330.

longing for release from this life and aspiration towards the blessedness of heaven is found in the Institutio III. 9. - the chapter concerning the "meditatio futurae vitae". In this chapter Calvin stresses how God uses the sorrows of life in this world in order to draw our hearts towards the country which is our real home[1]; we must contemn this life, and yet at the same time be grateful to God for the blessings He gives to us within it.[2] At the same time, Calvin insists that progress in the Christian life is not only a matter of "mortificatio" but includes "vivificatio" as well.[3] The Christian life, though a conflict, ought nevertheless to be one continuous progress in which we gradually approach the integrity of the image of God.[4] To assist us in this incessant struggle, Christ feeds the believer with Himself in the Eucharist.[5]

We can see that for Calvin salvation had a dual nature; it lay primarily in the future when the inheritance would be fully received. Nevertheless, this salvation had been "inaugurated" in the present - if we are to do justice to his language not only in the soul of the believer, but also in a certain way in the external

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1. Inst. III. ix. 1, 2. II. c. 523f.
2. Inst. III. ix. 3. II. c. 525.
3. Com. Ro. 6. 10. XLIX. c. 110.
4. Inst. III. iii. 9. II. c. 440.
5. Serm. I Cor. 10. 15-18. XLIX. c. 657ff.

order as well. Corresponding with the dual nature of salvation, Calvin also taught the dual nature of judgment - both present and future. This is perhaps most clearly brought out, if we compare his exegesis of I Cor. 3:12ff. in the commentary on that book and in the "Institutio". In the former treatment the judgment is interpreted as occurring before the great assize on the Last Day; on the other hand, in the "Institutio" it is interpreted as the judgment when men face the manifestation of God in some special revelation of His truth to them.[1] To find inconsistencies in different treatments of Calvin or the same passage or Scripture is indeed a rarity, and these two variant interpretations suggest to us that Calvin looked upon the judgment of God as both present and future. What we should like to know, however, is how these two judgments were connected in the mind of Calvin.

We note the same duality of present and future in Calvin's treatment of the Kingdom of God. In a certain sense Calvin can, like St. Augustine, call the Church the Kingdom of God for that phrase describes the new condition of the Church as re-formed by Christ.[2] Nevertheless, Calvin makes the same distinction concerning the Kingdom of God as he does when he speaks of the "renovatio" brought about by Christ; there is a perfection as well as a commencement of the Kingdom of God. Rest and glory

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1. Inst. III. v. 9. II. c. 499.

2. Com. Mt. 11. 11. XLV. c. 303.

are not ours until the Last Day, though we may possess now the Kingdom of God in the Gospel which consists in peace and joy.[1] Calvin refuses to give to the Kingdom of God a purely futuristic connotation:

> Sed falluntur, qui regnum Dei pro coelo accipiunt, quum potius spiritualem vitam significet, quae fide in hoc mundo inchoatur, magisque in dies adolescit secundum assiduous fidei progressus.[2]

We must not think that for Calvin the coming of the Kingdom was a purely inward matter, for in his comment on the petition "Thy Kingdom come" in the Institutio, he declares the Reign of God to come both in the progress of individual sanctification, and also in the expansion and reformation of the Church, together with the subduing of its enemies. Both processes, however, will not be completed till the Last Day.[3] Not only is the Kingdom of God both present and future, but there is to be found another duality in Calvin's conception of it. The Kingdom comes not only by the preaching of the Word, but also by the secret power of the Spirit, and it is necessary that both be joined together if the Kingdom is to be established.[4] It is by this distinction that Calvin endeavours to maintain the transcendence of the Kingdom within history. The Word may be truly preached, yet if God does not add to it the secret power of the Spirit it will not avail for

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1. Com. Mt. 24. 32. XLV. c. 670.
2. Com. Jn. 3. 3. XLVII. c. 54.
3. Inst. 3. xx. 42. II. c. 667.
4. Com. Mt. 6. 10. XLV. c. 197.

salvation. Thus Calvin cuts free the realization of the eternal electing purpose of God from any "alligatio" with external media. God still transcends the events of history, by His freedom to give the Spirit when and where He will. We can see that in this matter Calvin is basically in the position of Augustine when he allowed the possibility of God granting the grace of baptism without the further grace of perseverence, or when against the Donatists he argued that baptism could be "valid" yet not "efficacious". It is here perhaps that we can detect the dangers which accompany Calvin's insistence on the Ascension of our Lord; if the ascended Lord is only ruler over history by the giving of His Spirit when He so wills, the temporal realm apart from the giving of the Spirit is no more than the flux that it was to Augustine. What we have to ask both Augustine and Calvin is whether "unus autem non conversione Divinitatis in carnem, sed assumptione humanitatis in Deum" may not mean something more than this, or whether their solution is the only way of balancing the antithesis between the two clauses.

We must now consider the question of how much eschatological reality Calvin conceded to the realm of time and history from another angle - whether in any way he tended to denigrate physical existence in favour of the spiritual world. Did his emphasis on "meditatio futurae vitae" and the lifting of the hearts of believers to where the ascended Christ sits as their Representative really lead him to belittle man's physical and historical existence?

It is true that on occasion he can refer to the body as a prison and the world as a sepulcre, but in the very next paragraph he insists that the real hope of the Christian is not an escape into the realm of pure spirit but the Resurrection.[1] Death is to be welcomed because it is the end of the fight for believers, when once for all they are freed from the desires of the flesh.[2] It is highly probable that in such passages, Calvin has in mind such Pauline phrases as the "body of the flesh" and the "body of sin" and such verses as Romans 8:10.[3] Calvin, moreover, is insistent that the life of the spirit cannot be separated from resurrection, and that no resurrection would deprive the soul of its hope of immortality.[4]

Yet in spite of these facts, we cannot feel that Calvin's attitude in this matter is completely biblical; on occasion he seems to have an utter contempt for the body, and often in his sermons he calls it a "charonge" - rotting carcase.[5] So far does his disesteem of the body go that on occasion he can be

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1. Inst. III. ix. 4, 5. II. c. 526f.

2. Com. Phil. 1. 6. LII. c. 9f.

3. Cf. for a defence that this was Calvin's basic attitude on the matter, T. F. Torrance, Kingdom and Church, pp.92f.

4. Com. Mt. 22. 23. XLV. c. 604f.

5. Cf. Quistorp's judgment, Calvin's Doctrine of the Last Things, p.60: "Almost no word is strong enough for Calvin in order to express this his disesteem, indeed contempt of the body."

unbiblical enough to say that it is the soul of man which is the temple of the Holy Spirit.[1] Another point which might be put forward to argue for Calvin's spiritualizing tendencies is that Calvin with a not too certain Augustine is a creationist as to the origin of the soul, over against Luther who was a traducian.[2] It is true that if the traducian view, if adopted, is a powerful bulwark for any belief in the essential unity of soul and body, but in our opinion the creationist view (in the hands of its best exponents as St. Thomas) equally affirms the status or human physical existence. If God specially creates a soul which is perfectly fitting for the body received from the parents, it surely shows the greatness of Divine condescension in acceptance of and respect for the conditions of physical existence. Moreover, in respect to Calvin, we must remember that creationism was the dominant Western theological tradition on this matter, and therefore we cannot, solely on the basis of his creationism, accuse him of spiritualizing tendencies.

A more important argument in this direction, however, can be gained from Calvin's interpretation of I Cor. 15:27 where he argues that when Christ hands over the Kingdom to His Father He will put aside His humanity which at present mediates to us communion with God, but which will then be a veil which prevents

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1. Inst. III. xxv. 6. II. c. 735.

2. Serm. Job 3. 16. XXXIII. c. 162.

perfect union. By so doing Christ's Kingdom will pass from His humanity to His absolute Godhead, though Calvin adds to this qualification "quodammodo".[1] It is only fair to state that Calvin's teaching on this point is not completely clear. In his commentary on Ephesians he confesses Christ to be the mediator both for men and angels, and suggests that both have been brought back to a stable order (in firmum ordinem) by the grace of Christ. Apart from this work of mediation even the angels were in danger.[2] At the same time, the view put forward by him seems to remove the great significance which Calvin elsewhere puts upon the humanity of Christ, and the necessity for our salvation that we should partake of His "life-giving flesh". In any case, it appears that at the consummation Christ puts on one side the Mediatorship which He had taken upon Himself by the assumption of our humanity. While admitting that there are serious dangers in this view, it is, I believe, possible to see some justification for it. Does Christ's mediatorship necessarily depend upon His assumption of the nature of the creature for whom He mediates? If Christ is the Head of the angels, as Calvin believed, does that necessarily imply an assumption by Him of created spirit? We must remember that the dominant tradition in Western Christian orthodoxy is that Christ only became man in order to deal with

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1. Com. I Cor. 15. 27. XLIX. c. 549.

2. Com. Eph. 1. 10. LI. c. 151.

human sin, and that if man had not fallen there would have been no incarnation (the question, however, as to what would have happened if the Fall had not occurred is quite meaningless for an Augustinian theology with its insistence that Divine prescience and pre-ordination are the same thing). Calvin was not stepping outside this tradition, when he argued that Christ's assumption of our humanity was but the temporal means adopted for our salvation. What he has done, however, is to raise the problem in an acute form how Christ can be the Head of any creature without assuming that creature's nature - a problem closely related to the problem of what is meant when we say that all things were created "through Christ". We can therefore to a large extent acquit Calvin of spiritualizing in this matter, unless we maintain that the only way to avoid spiritualization is to insist that even after the consummation of all things God must still enter into a "history" for the sake of the redeemed.

Yet when we have freed Calvin from these charges, it must be admitted that at times he tends to belittle the physical side of human existence. He insists for example that sacraments and the outward exercises of religion are only given to us because of our infirmity, and that their real purpose is to help us to seek God spiritually in His heavenly glory, and to turn our minds away from the things of earth.[1] In fact, Christ gives no more

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1. Com. Ps. 9. 12. XXXI. c. 102.

through the sacraments than through the Word, but because of our weakness uses a variety of helps.[1] We see that for Calvin there is no rejoicing in the physical order and the honour paid to it by being used by God for the purposes of salvation. The crucified and risen body of our Lord is not an eternal glory in the Godhead, but in the end will be put away for the direct spiritual rule of the Divine. The image of God in man is a matter of the soul and is in no way reflected in the human body. These we must admit are spiritualizing tendencies in Calvin, and it would be hard to deny that running through his theology there is an undercurrent of desire to ascend from the physical to the spiritual realm, to escape from time into eternity.

In Augustine, we noticed that a similar tension between time and eternity arose out of that writer's Platonism, as it expressed itself in the view that every event in the temporal world depended upon its determination in the eternal world of ideas. Do we meet a similar idea in Calvin, and if so how far has it influenced his theology? This question must be answered in the negative, as in one passage Calvin specifically repudiates Augustine's understanding of creation through Christ in terms of the Platonic doctrine of ideas[2], though, tantilizingly, he does not deal with this question at any length. In fact, though Calvin quite openly accepts the

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1. True Partaking. IX. c. 481.

2. Com. Jn. 1. 3. XXXVII. c. 4.

doctrine of creation through Christ, yet in his commenting on such passages as Heb. 1:2; Col. 1:16; Jn. 1:3, he never develops what he means by this. We must remember, however, that in Calvin's time unlike that of Augustine, the doctrine of creation was not a matter of dispute, and we can therefore understand why Calvin did not feel it necessary to develop his views on this subject. It is of course possible to argue that Calvin had been influenced by the Platonism which he had encountered in his humanist studies, but it is extremely difficult to find any clear evidence of this. We may be able to detect similarities of thought in certain matters, but in our opinion it is impossible to obtain any direct evidence on this matter, or even to find any striking parallels as we can in the case of Augustine. Though we find ample traces of Calvin stressing the eternal and transcendent in opposition to the physical and temporal, yet we have no real grounds for ascribing such an ethos to Platonism.

In Augustine, we noticed that the Platonically-conceived ideal realm, because of its essentially static nature tends to lead to determinism in the temporal sphere. This philosophical presupposition does not seem to have influenced Calvin's determinism in any significant way, as instead of speaking about the eternal ideas, Calvin preferred to talk about the providence of God, His eternal counsel and His continual operation.[1] On the other hand

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1. Com. Gen. 41. 17. XXIII. c. 522.

we have found in Calvin the tendency to denigrate the physical and temporal media of salvation, and because of this there is no developed understanding of eschatology in its cosmic aspects. As Quistorp has written concerning the Reformers:

> ..... they neglected the special content of the Christian hope. Too pre-occupied with their own peculiar theme and too much afraid of distortions, they never succeeded in attaining any conclusive formulation of Christian eschatology. This had disastrous consequences for subsequent Protestant theology. It became more and more de-eschatologized, or rather subjected to a perverse spiritualization and individualization of eschatology.[1]

Calvin's fear of chiliasm probably prevented him from doing real justice to the more physical and cosmic aspects of the Christian hope. Yet this failure to treat with due seriousness the End and consummation of history would tend to devaluate for him the whole content of history as such. Because for Calvin the present stage of Church history is the Millenium, the apocalyptic signs in the Bible are treated as symbols of the continuing situation of the Church. Yet because these specific signs are generalized, the eschatology of which they are symbols is essentially timeless, and apart from any specific event. The very particularity of apocalyptic signs, however fantastic they may seem to us, does relate specific historical events to the End; these events have meaning because they possess an individual relation to the End. If on the other hand these signs are generalized as to symbolize

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1. Quistorp, op. cit., p.11.

the continual position of the Church vis-a-vis the world, individual events tend to lose any specific eschatological significance, and history tends to be regarded as a mere flux. Because these signs are interpreted of the perennial life of the Church, the End is both placed at a distance (it may come at any moment or a million years hence), and it is deprived of any specific content. It is noticeable in Calvin that the Christian hope is not so much placed on the End of the age, but on the blessedness and rest which awaits the believer after death. Isn't it possible to see in the intensity of his polemic in Psychopannychia the outworking of this attitude? The End is individualized, and "inaugurated" eschatology is not so much a churchly experience, but is found in the believer's progress in regeneration.

It is because of this that we do not find in Calvin a living sense of the Church as the "eschatological congregation" - the group of people where the powers of the End are already at work.[1] Because of the generalized interpretation of apocalyptic imagery the cosmic End has no real content which the Church could begin to experience as a body in the present; the End could only be approached by the individual believer as he approximated in his life to the blessedness which awaited him after death.

It is well to remember here the significance of Calvin's

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1. We do, however, find occasional traces of this understanding of the "eschatological congregation" in Calvin's prayers. Cf. the one at the end of Praelectio 36 on Hosea (C.T.S. Minor Prophets. Vol.I. pp.487f.).

keen sense of the "locality" of Heaven - if Christ was in Heaven He could not be brought again under the corruptible elements of this world, if He was truly man His risen body could not possess the attribute of ubiquity. This distinction, strictly justified as it may be, tended to keep apart the End from the life of the Church. Of course such tendency was to some counteracted by Calvin's strong sense of the work of the Holy Spirit lifting up the hearts of believers to where Christ reigned in Heaven, yet we must remember that the belief that the Holy Spirit was primarily a corporate rather than an individual gift had disappeared long centuries previously. The present apprehension of the End, just because the Holy Spirit was only given to the elect within the body of the Church, was still an individual matter. As we have seen earlier the working of the Word and the Spirit were not co-terminous for Calvin, and it needed both together to constitute the presence of the Kingdom of God.

The result is, that in the theology of Calvin, for different reasons from that in regard to Augustine, eternity is still held apart from time in any essential sense. Eternity makes use of temporal media but in no way commits itself to them. Here is the eschatological root of Calvin's failure to conceive of predestination christologically. Christ is to Calvin as He was to Augustine the "speculum electionis" - the Incarnation brought into effect in history the Divine decrees which would be consummated in the End. Yet neither the End nor the Decrees are in any essential relationship

with the central event in time, nor are they determined by it. Whether such a belief really does justice to the confession of the Church concerning the supreme importance of the incarnate work of our Lord is a question, which though it must be asked, cannot expect any thorough answer within the bounds of this study.

Chapter XI.

The Teaching of Augustine and Calvin on Predestination, Baptism and Eschatology Compared

(a) Predestination

Augustine was Calvin's acknowledged master in his exposition of the doctrine of predestination; even a cursory examination of Calvin's teaching on this subject will reveal this. On occasion, he can go so far as to say that he could write a confession of his own belief on this subject out of Augustine's own writings.[1] This is sufficient to establish Calvin's dependence, but we have to ask the further question whether Calvin was a good interpreter of his master. Quotations from Augustine abound in the writings of the Reformer, but that does not ensure that he did justice to the former's thought. Any student of exegesis knows that words quoted out of their context can utterly mislead in regard to the total import or the argument. Furthermore, we must remember that Calvin stood sufficiently near to the Schoolmen in time that it would have been remarkable if he had escaped contagion from their method of random quotation from the Fathers. Though Calvin so often tried to interpret the Scriptures in relation to their context of history and thought, it is still possible that he may not have applied these methods in a thoroughgoing manner to his study of previous theologians. In our opinion, one of the most pressing tasks in Calvin scholarship is a detailed study of his use of the Fathers and Schoolmen. In this chapter, however,

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1. De Aet. Prae. VIII. c. 266. For the thoroughgoing nature of Calvin's appeal to Augustine on this matter, see Serv. et Lib. Bk.3. VI. c. 292-326 and De Aet. Prae. VIII. c. 265-70.

we can only draw attention to some of the similarities and differences in this rather restricted field.

In the first place, as we should expect, the similarities between the two writers are very striking; on the surface, at least, far more noticeable than the ways in which they differ. They both possess a similarly deterministic cosmology, though Augustine never develops this aspect of his thought with logical precision, as does Calvin in his chapters on providence in the third edition of the Institutio.[1] Augustine is quite willing to say with Calvin that God works in men's hearts even to incline them to commit evil deeds, which He can use to His glory - though he is careful to add that evil men are only so moved as a desert for the sins which they have already committed - an extension in fact of the typically Augustinian idea that sin can be a "poena peccati".[2] As Calvin would likewise hold that all men are under the bonds of original sin, it is hard to distinguish any significant difference between his thought and that of Augustine upon this particular point. It is true that Calvin clearly enunciates a doctrine of double-predestination, yet as we have seen he can claim very good support from the phraseology of Augustine, even though the latter does not present the doctrine in any systematic form.[3] Like Calvin, his

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1. Cf. pp.20ff.

2. See De Grat. et Lib. Arb. xx. 41 and 43. XLIV. c. 906 and 909.

3. Cf. pp.23ff.

last appeal, when the predestinating activity of God is called into account, is to the "occulta iustitia" of God, which is far above human understanding.[1] At times, we even find striking similarities of mood, as for example when we compare the attitude of the two men to texts which emphasize the universal aspects of the work of Christ.[2]

At the same time there are differences between the two writers - often so concealed that they would be easy to miss, or if one was unscrupulously propagandist, to ignore. Some of the more important of these are in relation to the understanding of free will. Whatever objections might be raised against Calvin's teaching of free will, the doctrine itself is remarkably clear and consistent; he would surely have leapt at Blondel's succinct definition of human responsibility: "la solidarité de la personne humaine avec ses actes."[3] Man's responsibility lies in that he wills what he does, his acts are affirmations of his own personality, and when they are judged, his total personality is being judged at the same time. In the main, the mature Augustine accepted a very similar view of human freedom, but there is one significant difference. As we have seen, Calvin, following Aquinas, definitely

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1. Cf. pp.25f.

2. Cf. p.34 and pp.246f.

3. Quoted by A. Bernel, Calvin, défenseur de la prédestination, (Dissertation Geneva), p.157.

rejects any idea that human freedom lies in a desire for happiness; rather it consists in a deliberate choice between two alternatives. Thus the content of freedom is intellectual rather than affective. Augustine, however, places the essential freedom of the will in the desire to be happy which all men possess.[1] At first, the difference seems unimportant, but on a closer consideration we shall discover a subtler and more penetrating approach to the problem than that of Calvin. In the first place, if man does not possess this fundamental desire for happiness, punishment becomes meaningless, for how can an intelligible judgment be passed on one who does not desire happiness? Secondly, and to my mind more important, unless one places the freedom of the will in such a desire for happiness, how can the will be made free by grace, or enslaved by sin? According to Calvin's argumentation, it is hard to see why the will is not equally free when performing the dictates of sin, as when it performs a good deed because it is under the influence of grace. Both actions are the results of equally deliberative resolves of the personality - the will therefore must be equally free in each action. By placing freedom in the desire for happiness, Augustine has overcome this problem - when man sins, his desire for happiness, still as real as ever, has, however, been perverted to follow a misunderstood end, and, therefore, free will is enslaved by sin. On the other hand,

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1. De Pat. et Grat. xlvi. XLIV. c. 273.

under grace, the same desire follows its true end - and thus the will can rightly be said to be free. It appears, therefore, that Calvin's desire for logical simplicity blinded him to the depth of Augustine's psychological insight.

In our study of Calvin, we saw that the tendency of his thought was supra-lapsarian - that in the last resort, the Fall of Adam had not just been foreseen or permitted by God, but actually ordained and assisted.[1] If one is going to carry through Calvin's stress on the all-embracing activity of the Living God as outlined in his treatment of providence in the Institutio, it is hard to see any other logical conclusion. Augustine, on the other hand, was aware that if there is not a certain indeterminacy somewhere in the cosmic drama, it is frankly impossible to avoid the charge that God is the author of evil. Because of this Adam possessed the grace of "posse non peccare", but not the grace of "non posse peccare"; his fall was in no way necessitated by God, even though it was foreseen by Him.[2]

Another difference between Augustine and Calvin, this time rather a matter of emphasis than open divergence, is the former's distinction between God's operating grace by which He prepares the human will, and His co-operating grace by which it is perfected.[3]

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1. Cf. p.240.

2. Cf. p.23f.

3. De Grat. et Lib. Arb. xvii. 33. XLIV. c. 901.

Now Calvin does not reject utterly this distinction between operating and co-operating grace, though he is very careful to rule out certain interpretations of it. The distinction must not be interpreted to mean that man desires good even if not effectually, or that it depends upon our co-operation with subsequent grace whether we reject the first grace or yield to it.[1] If the distinction only means that where the first grace has been given there is also a readiness on man's part afterwards to obey, Calvin is willing to accept the terminology - but what it must not mean is that man is able to make himself a fellow-worker with God.[2] Calvin was well aware that this concept of co-operating grace could easily be made the foundation of a system of merit and reward, utterly at variance with the Reformation principle of "justification by faith alone". Calvin, though he probably gives a fair interpretation of what Augustine meant by the term, makes no use of it in his own thought, and is probably unaware of the reality which Augustine is here trying to affirm. The latter is emphasizing that whatever we do under grace, is not only a result of divine activity, but our own action as well. We have seen earlier that Augustine maintained that grace gave to man true freedom, that by being under grace man affirms his own being at the same time - against any view that he

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1. Inst. II. ii. 6. II. c. 190f.

2. Inst. II. iii. 11. II. c. 221f.

was just exchanging the slavery of sin for slavery to God. Paradoxically speaking, man is most natural when he is under grace. As we have seen, however, in our study of Calvin, at times that writer seemed hardly able to conceive of a human nature at all, but only of the direct action of God using the human personality as its instrument. It is because of this tendency on Calvin's part to deny any real status to human nature, that he failed to see the importance of Augustine's distinction between operating and co-operating grace. For Augustine on the other hand, liberty was the essence of charity[1], and "caritas" not only meant the disinterested love of men, but love for God as well. Because Calvin lacked a real understanding of the affirmation of human freedom and personality under God's graciousness, it was hardly possible for him to conceive how man could really love God.

Gotthard Nygren in a recent book has drawn attention to the fact that Augustine had to reconcile his doctrine of grace with the understanding of merit as accepted by the North African Church at that time.[2] This attempted reconciliation is depicted in such often-quoted phrases of Augustine, as that when God crowns our merits, He crowns His own gifts. It must be admitted that no real synthesis between the Augustinian understanding of grace

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1. De Nat. et Grat. lxv. 78. XLVI. c. 286.

2. Das Prädestinationsproblem in der Theologie Augustins, (Göttingen, 1956), especially pp.69ff.

and the doctrine of merit stemming from Tertullian then present in the "Gemeindetheologie" is really possible. The two views stem out of radically-differing concepts of the relationship of God to men, and are logically irreconcileable. It is no wonder then that Calvin did not mention this aspect of Augustinian thought - he had no need to, for he was not likewise hampered in his theological work by the traditional phraseology and concepts of popular piety.

In Calvin, we noticed that grace in its saving activity was both indivisible and irresistible - if a person was forgiven and justified, he would also persevere to the end and be glorified. In Augustine, however, we saw that it was different, and that it was possible for a man to receive the grace of forgiveness without, however, being given the further grace of perseverance. It appears that Augustine allowed to those who had received the gift of the remission of sins, and yet who God willed should not receive the grace of perseverance, a certain intermediate type of freedom. A man can by his own free choice of evil, lose the grace of God which he has already received.[1] Is it going too far to suggest that Augustine held that such people possessed the grace similar to that granted to Adam of "posse non peccare", though God foreknew that because He had not granted them the grace of perseverance, they would eventually fall? Calvin, of course,

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1. De Corr. et Grat. vi. 9. XLIV. c. 921.

would not hold such a belief because he held that all who had been forgiven and justified by God, would likewise endure to the end.

It is this same stress on the indivisibility of saving grace that is at the root of the difference between Augustine and Calvin over the matter of assurance. Because, says Calvin, you believe that you are justified and accepted by God now, you can be sure of your perseverance, because God does not give faith which only justifies but does not lead to glorification; the same faith which holds on to God for justification, likewise assures us of our final perseverance.[1] Augustine would argue, however, that a man could be certain of forgiveness, because he had been baptized into the Catholic Church, the society of "caritas" - but he dare not presume on enduring to the end, for God could give the grace of forgiveness without that of perseverance.[2]

The divergences which we have so far detected between the thought of Calvin and Augustine on the question of grace and predestination have so far been of a minor character, scarcely affecting the structure of the writers' thought in its significant outlines. In one respect, however, Calvin rejects one of the fundamental presuppositions of Augustine in his treatment of the problem of evil; he refuses to say that evil is essentially the negation of being, and therefore cannot in any way be said to be

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1. See Inst. III. 2. 18-20, 39, 40. II. c. 413f., 429ff.

2. De Don. Pers. I. 1. XLV. c. 993ff.

created or caused by God. In its place, he prefers to affirm that those things which are unrighteously done by man, can at the same time be righteously the works of God.[1] Because Augustine regarded evil as essentially a negation of being, the turning of the will to evil is completely inexplicable - it cannot be explained but it equally cannot be attributed to God Who is the fullness of being. Because of this, Augustine cannot speak of God in any way ordaining evil, but rather of permitting it; He could have prevented the Fall both of men and of angels, but He preferred to leave this matter in their own power.[2] At the same time, he suggests that in a certain way even evil can be a good, just as the beauty of a picture is enhanced by well-placed shadows.[3] Evil is under the control of God, Who uses it for a good end, but it is impossible that it should have its origin in Him. But as we have seen, Calvin refused to accept this ultimate "solution" of the problem of evil - and therefore in the last resort, evil owes its origin to the ordination rather than the permission of God. To both men, however, the problem of evil "exit in mysterium": for Augustine the mystery lies in how this negation of being could ever "exist" at all; for Calvin, how anything declared to be evil by God could yet ultimately be

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1. De Aet. Prae. VIII. c. 353.

2. De Civ. Dei xiv. 27. XLI. c. 435f.

3. Ibid. xi. 18. XLI. c. 332.

regarded as being ordained by Him. The first solution seems almost verbal subterfuge (based on the misuse of the verb "to be"); the second cuts the Gordian knot of an ethical problem by hinting at the transcendental invalidity of ethical concepts.

The dominant feature of our consideration of the understandings of Augustine and Calvin in regard to the doctrine of predestination has been their surprising similarity. In outline, apart from Augustine's stress on evil being considered as the negation of being, there is very little difference between the two understandings. The doctrines of the two men possess a subtly different texture; one feels that Augustine's teaching bears the stamp of pioneering in almost hitherto unknown theological territory, Calvin's on the other hand possesses the tone of a judicious summing-up in the light of the basic affirmations of the Reformation. Augustine's understanding was moulded in the conflicts with Manicheeism and Pelagianism, his only guidance being gained from the Scriptures and his own philosophical presuppositions; Calvin, on the other hand, had the whole Scholastic debate on this subject from which to draw his conclusions. Calvin, as we should expect, is more logical and consistent than Augustine, and yet we feel that he often lacks Augustine's subtle apprehension of a problem. At times, Augustine's thought is not systematically clear, and it is possible for varying schools of interpretation to find support in his writings.[1]

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1. For how both Thomism and Molinism can find legitimate support in the writings of Augustine see G. Nygren, op. cit., pp.88-97.

With Calvin, it is different, and the various schools of Reformed theology differ not so much in their interpretation of Calvin, as concerning the interpretation of the scriptural data upon which he based his judgments.

(b) Baptism

In discussing the teachings of Augustine and Calvin concerning baptism, we again must keep in mind the varying conditions under which these two writers wrote their theology. Calvin was not in any way bound by a theological tradition; he with the other Reformers believed it was their duty to restore the Christian faith to its pristine purity, and therefore they were not strictly bound in any real allegiance to previous theological formulations. In the affair of Caroli, Calvin revealed this attitude by refusing to sign assent to the Apostles, Nicene and Athanasian creeds. Moreover, Calvin never really came to polemical grips with the Medieval doctrine of baptism upheld by the Roman Church. He could criticize it, as he did in the Institutio and the Antidote to the Canons of Trent, but it was always criticism from a distance, from the general point-of-view of Reformed theology as understood by Calvin, never from the mutual acceptance of general basic principles. Calvin's main polemical dealings with the doctrine of baptism was with other Protestants, especially the Lutherans and the Anabaptists, with whom there was a greater community in

common doctrinal presuppositions. Calvin's baptismal theology was really sharpened fighting against other Protestants, not against the traditional teaching of Rome.

On the other hand, Augustine was the heir to a definite theological tradition, even if as we have seen in our chapter on baptism in the Western Church till the time of Augustine, it was often in details rather uncertain in regard to this sacrament. He had, for example, to do justice to the common understanding of baptism as "justificatio ex fide remissione peccatorum per baptismum". At the same time, the question of baptism came to the forefront in his conflicts with Donatism and Pelagianism - and his understanding of the sacrament had to be adapted to the exigencies of the situation. Against the Donatists, he had to maintain the paradoxical position of stressing the objectivity and yet belittling the effect of baptism. Objectivity had to be stressed in order to rebut the Donatist insinuation that the grace conferred by the sacrament depended either upon the personal holiness of the minister, or of the minister's ordainers. On the other hand, the efficacy of the rite itself is belittled, in order to show that it will in no way profit the recipient unless he belongs to the Catholic Church, the society of "caritas".

Against the Pelagians also, Augustine's argument concerning baptism is paradoxical. In the first place, he stresses the necessity of baptism for salvation - John 3:5 occurs with almost monotonous regularity in the early anti-Pelagian treatises - if

infants cannot enter the Kingdom of God they cannot be saved, and they cannot enter the Kingdom of God except through baptism, which everyone would agree, confers the remission of sins - so runs Augustine's argument. If you recognize infant baptism, you must also admit the universality of original sin - that is Augustine's point. Later in the controversy, however, Augustine had to meet the argument that after a man's past sins had been forgiven in baptism, he ought to be able to lead a righteous life in the strength or his own free-will. Against this, Augustine argued that the baptismal gift of the remission or sins alone would not lead to salvation, unless God implemented it by the further gift or final perseverance. Thus, Augustine in this controversy had to stress both the necessity of baptism for salvation, and the insufficiency of baptism alone to achieve this end. There are, therefore, three principal determining factors in Augustine's understanding of baptism: the traditional outlook of the Church to which he was obliged to do justice, and then the varying demands of the Donatist and Pelagian controversies.

In considering the differences and similarities between the teaching of Augustine and Calvin on baptism, we must always bear in mind the living context out of which the understandings of these two men arose; otherwise, superficial similarities may be too easy to detect. An example of this too easy detecting of similarities is afforded by Beckmann, when he says that Calvin's distinction between "offerre" and "accipere" in relation to the

sacrament, is similar to the distinction of Augustine between "esse" and "prodesse".[1] But let us look at the context of the distinctions: that of Augustine is primarily ecclesiastical - a Donatist can receive baptism, but the sacrament does not profit him till he belongs to the Catholic Church; Calvin, however, is thinking of the question, in what sense can an unworthy recipient be said to receive the sacrament and what is offered to him by it. It is significant that Augustine's distinction is made primarily in relation to baptism, while Calvin has really in mind the Eucharist. One, of course, could argue that as the Catholic Church was to Augustine the society of "caritas", that even his distinction is based in the last resort on the personal attitude of the recipient - but to argue from a writer's presumed logical consistency is as dangerous as the argumentum e silentio.

Nevertheless, even when we bear this "caveat" in mind, it must be admitted that Calvin's sacramental doctrine owes a great deal to St. Augustine. One has only to read the treatises against Westphal to see how constantly Calvin appeals to Augustine as his master.

Perhaps, the most striking similarity between the sacramental teaching of Augustine and Calvin is their stress on the necessity of the Word for the sacramental action. There is even the same

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1. Vom Sakrament bei Calvin (Tübingen, 1926), p.42. In this section, it will be obvious that I am greatly dependent upon Beckmann's work.

tension in the understanding of these writers as to whether the Word is primarily to be understood as spoken or believed.[1] Both stress the importance of the Word being believed, in order that the sacrament might be efficacious, but they also both lay stress on the utterance of the Word. In the thought of Augustine, this objective utterance seems primarily to concern the consecration formula containing the words of institution, which is said during the rite; in Calvin, the emphasis is rather on the recalling of the promises of God and the proclamation of them in order to promote faith in the recipients of the sacrament. At the same time, it must be remembered in regard to the words of institution that Augustine does not require a dominical commandment in order to establish a sacrament[2], though concerning these minor sacraments as the sealing of catechumens, Augustine never develops any specific theory. Both Augustine and Calvin, however, regard the function of the sacrament as that of making the Word visible.[3]

Again both Augustine and Calvin are of one mind concerning the nature of the cleansing effected by infant baptism - the infant is delivered from the guilt rather than from the power of sin.[4] They also agree that by baptism the Holy Spirit is infused into

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1. Cf. pp.54f. and pp.259f.

2. De Cat. Rud. xxvi. 50. XL. c. 314/5.

3. c. Faust Manich XXXIX. c. 356f.; cf. p.259.

4. Cf. pp.45f. and p.274.

the hearts of infants[1], though Calvin would also argue that to receive baptism does not necessarily mean also to receive the Spirit - a possibility which also Augustine would allow.[2] Both would also allow that it was possible to receive the sanctification of the Spirit apart from and before the sign of Baptism.[3] They also concur in affirming that before the sacrament could become effective, it had to be implemented objectively by the work of the Holy Spirit and the subjective side by faith.[4] Faith is the vessel by which one draws from the sacrament.[5] Augustine, however, has the further thought, which I can find nowhere echoed in Calvin, that it is only through the Holy Spirit, working through the faith of the parents of sponsors, that a child is brought to baptism in the first place.[6] Calvin's concern is with the work of the Holy Spirit in the heart of the recipient of the sacrament and he seems to neglect the work of the Spirit through which the person is led to receive the Sacrament in the first place. Augustine recognizes an inner and an outer working of the Spirit, while Calvin tends to concentrate entirely upon the former.

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1. Cf. p.49 and pp.274f.
2. Cf. p.50.
3. Cf. p.50; True Partaking IX. c. 490.
4. Cf. pp.259f.
5. Trac. in Ioan. 32. 7. XXV. c. 1645.
6. Cf. pp.57f.

Another similarity between the two writers was that they both recognized the Old Testament sacraments to convey the same reality as those of the New.[1]

At the same time, there are also serious differences between the two writers - one of them, which we have already encountered in our discussion of the doctrine of predestination, concerns that of the indivisibility of grace. Augustine, we saw, even in the baptized reprobate, allowed the gift of forgiveness to be received, while Calvin insisted that saving grace in any form was only given to those whom God had foreordained to persevere to the end. It appears to be the general view of Augustine that forgiveness of sin was invariably given in baptism, though this gift could be lost afterwards by unbelief; Calvin, however, believed that the baptized reprobate received no saving grace through the sacrament. At the same time, the outline of both theologians' positions in this respect is often blurred. As we have seen earlier, Augustine is willing to consider the possibility that a person who receives baptism in schism does not at the same time receive forgiveness of sins. On the other hand, Calvin can speak of the reprobates who are within the covenant as possessing some kind of temporary faith[2],

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1. Cf. pp.42f.; pp.254f.

2. Inst. 3. 2. 11. II. c. 406.

and in one passage, he also seems to suggest that the Jews by reason of the covenant were freed from the curse put upon the descendants of Adam.[1] Yet having made these qualifications, it would still appear to be generally true of the thought of Augustine and Calvin, that the former believed that by baptism some grace was given to the non-elect, i.e., in remission of guilt for past and original sin, while the latter would not allow this possibility.

Another difference between the two writers, this time rather in development than in specific contradiction, lies in the use of the idea of the covenant as brought into relation with baptism. We saw that Augustine was well aware of the similarity in function between baptism and circumcision, though he did not develop this as far as to see baptism and circumcision as parallel entrances into the one covenant of grace.[2] This Calvin did - and in so doing, gave at least a really intelligible account of what was effected by actual rite of baptism. Like circumcision, baptism incorporated the recipient into the covenant-people of God - though it did not guarantee his salvation, as it was possible for him, like many of the Israelites to apostasize. By making this affirmation, Calvin dispelled a great deal of the vagueness which surrounded Augustinian teaching on what the rite of baptism actually did. It must be remembered, however, that this is only

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1. Com. Ezek. 16. 21. XL. c. 355.

2. Cf. p.43.

the logical advance on Augustine's own position, and cannot be said in any way to contradict it; we may justifiably surmise that if Augustine had been able to work out his own thought on baptism apart from the Donatist and Pelagian controversies, he too would have arrived at this most helpful parallel between baptism and circumcision as means of entrance into the covenant-people of God.

Augustine and Calvin, however, held very different views concerning the necessity of baptism for salvation. As we have seen, the former, under the pressures of the Pelagian controversy, tended to harden his insistence on the utter necessity of the sacrament for salvation.[1] Calvin, however, would never allow this - and in this fact lies the basic difference between the Augustinian and Calvinist attitudes - Augustine believed that the rite actually gave and conferred something upon the recipient, while for Calvin, it only sealed and confirmed a status which was already in existence. For Augustine, salvation depended upon the sacrament, for Calvin it rested upon the promise. According to Calvin, neglect of the sacrament could lead to loss of salvation, but that was only because such neglect arose out of unbelief, and constituted a definite contracting-out of the covenant status. For Calvin, salvation depended upon the promise of God, whose workings could transcend any temporal media; Augustine, on the other hand, insisted that salvation was bound up with certain

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1. Cf. pp.59f.

earthly acts, i.e. the receiving of the sacraments. Let it not be thought that Augustine was limiting the power of God as compared with Calvin, and putting it at the mercy of historical fortuity. Rather he asserts that it is through the work of the Holy Spirit that a child is brought to baptism - in other words, according to Calvin, God's omnipotent will is achieved apart from a specific temporal event, while to Augustine, God's equally omnipotent will is achieved through these. To ask which of these two views is more compatible with faith in an Incarnate and yet Ascended Lord is to raise a very difficult question. At the same time, though Augustine stresses the salvation-necessity of baptism, he will not tie the gift of the Spirit to the actual reception of the sacrament; just as Calvin appeals to Abraham as the example of those who receive the covenant-gift before the seal of the covenant, so Augustine refers to Cornelius who receives the Spirit of sanctification before he is baptized.[1] Calvin's position is only the full drawing-out of a motif, latent but undeveloped in the thought of Augustine.

Finally, Calvin has an entirely different interpretation of the distinction between the validity and efficacy of the sacraments. Any sacrament administered according to the promise and institution of our Lord is a real sacrament, but it only becomes efficacious for salvation where and when God wills that it shall be. There

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1. De Baptismo. IV. xxi. 28. XLIII. c. 172.

is no sphere, as that of the Catholic Church in the thought of Augustine, where baptism seems automatically to become efficacious. Calvin will not regard the children of Roman Catholics as strangers, because they are born of neither a holy father nor a holy mother, because God has made the promise of life to a thousand generations, and therefore they are still the children of saints.[1] The whole trend of Calvin's thought had made the old distinction between "valid" and "efficacious" quite useless, as it no longer explained anything; and it is necessary to admit that the formulation of the problem in these terms, really arose out of the polemical exigencies of the Donatist conflict.

The results of our consideration of the baptismal and predestinarian teaching of Augustine and Calvin have been in outline very similar. Both writers have the same basic outline of thought - but again there are divergencies, perhaps more important in regard to the doctrine of baptism than in relation to predestination. In considering both doctrines, we meet the question as to whether we are to think of grace as indivisible in its activity. Is there a grace which forgives, but does not ultimately save? Augustine thought there was while Calvin disagreed. Then there is the question as to how far God's saving activity limits itself to certain events which it controls, or whether the

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1. App. to The True Method of Reforming the Church, VII. c. 680f.

relationship between God's grace and the sacraments of the Church is purely occasional as Calvin would maintain. Was Calvin's position in this matter the logical result of Augustinian principles, or was the Bishop of Hippo hindered in this matter by the traditional theological outlook of his Church? On the other hand, is it not equally possible that Augustine had a real appreciation of the value which was enshrined by the traditional insistence that a gift was conferred by the sacrament "ex opere operato"? Then perhaps, there is the final question - what is the status of man under grace? A problem of which Calvin, probably in reaction against the Medieval doctrine of merit, seemed completely unaware, and of which we have certain evidence that Augustine was conscious. These tensions in the thought of the two theologians have been revealed; now we must enquire concerning their origin, and also how far they are capable of solution on the pre-suppositions common to Augustine and Calvin.

Eschatology

It is not necessary for us to compare Augustine and Calvin on this matter at so great a length as in regard to the questions of predestination and baptism, because we have already touched on this subject in our treatment of Calvin's eschatology. Nevertheless, because we believe that the different attitude of these theologians towards baptism and predestination when compared with that of the

New Testament is rooted in a change of eschatological perspective, it is necessary for us to see how far these two theologians stand together in this matter.

In the first place, both Augustine and Calvin distrusted Chiliasm, and sought to discourage any attempts to predict the time of the End, especially when these predictions were based upon contemporary events. As a result of this, the Millenium represented for both writers "the time of the Church" and did not refer to the renovated earth after the Second Coming. An essentially eschatological symbol was interpreted of the continual life of the Church between the times. Such re-translation of eschatological symbols has been necessary for the Church ever since the end of the first century when any attempt is made to speak about "inaugurated" eschatology. On the other hand, in such re-interpretation there is constant danger that the eschatological symbols may become depotentiated when applied in a thoroughgoing manner to the historical existence of the Church. Instead of connecting the events of the life of the Church directly to the End, it may instead deprive the symbols of true eschatological significance. Whether this has not happened, is a question which we must put to Calvin and Augustine in relation to their re-interpretation of the Millenium.

In the second place, both writers tend to under-stress the cosmic elements in the New Testament eschatological tradition. In the <u>De Civitate Dei</u> we find little stress on the ἀνακεφαλαίωσις

of all things in Christ at the End; the emphasis is rather that the End marks the final separation between the two cities. Calvin, while in fidelity to the Bible admitting that a cosmic restoration will take place, shows no real enthusiasm for going into details as to what this might mean.

Thirdly, in both writers there can be traced a tendency towards individualism in eschatological matters. In the early Augustine this is found in the teaching, which he later outgrew, concerning the possibility of intellectual vision in this life. In the later Augustine, it is particularly found in his retention of the Origenic idea that the hour of death is the personal equivalent to the Last Day. In Calvin, it is to be found rather connected with his stress on the ascended Christ, and that we should lift up our hearts to where He reigns above. In his emphasis on the "meditatio futuruae vitae", we detect this insistence on our seeking to escape from the corruptions of this world in order to be with our ascended Lord. Yet as his Psychopannychia makes clear, this ascent is conceived of rather in terms of the future state of the soul after death than that of resurrection. It will be understood that resurrection is primarily a corporate idea (there is only a general resurrection, never an individual one), while the idea of the ascent of the soul to heaven after death tends to be an individual conception.

The chief differences, however, between the two theologians arises out of Calvin's repudiation of Augustine's Platonism.

This distinction is all-pervading. For example, the question of the status of the nature of the creature in relation to predestinating grace finds its point of departure here. Augustine, because of his teaching concerning "rationes seminales" did endow the creature with some kind of nature though he could give no satisfying understanding of the relationship of the "rationes seminales" to the Divine predestination. Calvin in rejecting this concept of the "ratio seminalis" found it difficult to show how a creature could possess a nature of its own - and probably for this reason, had to introduce a distinction between the general and salvific operations of the Holy Spirit.

More important, however, in regard to the matter of eschatology is that Platonic pre-suppositions caused a slight differentiation between Augustine's and Calvin's understandings of history. For the former, history was completely determined by the Divine "rationes" and, therefore, it was not irrelevant to the salvation of the individual. If one dying in infancy was to be saved, it was because that child had been pre-determined to be brought to baptism before its decease. Augustine, however, was not thoroughgoing in attaching salvation to an historical event brought about by Divine fore-ordination, as the grace of perseverance possessed no external counterpart.[1] On the other hand, to Calvin

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1. It is worthwhile noting that in this question of the indivisibility of grace lies the reason why Augustine's attitude to the "parousia" was one of fear, while that of Calvin was of joyful expectancy. Augustine could never be sure of the grace of perseverance to the end, while Calvin believed that having once truly received grace, it could never be withdrawn.

the course of history is finally irrelevant to salvation - above all historical events there exists the supremacy of the Spirit who guarantees that the covenant-mercies of God are ensured, whether an infant is baptized or not. For Augustine, history is determined by the eternal ideas; Calvin, on the other hand, stresses the mastery of the Spirit over external event.

Yet in both writers, the eschatological position of the Church is ambiguous. The understanding of the Church as the "eschatological congregation", the community where the powers of the End are already working, and in whose life and mission Judgment Day is anticipated, has practically disappeared. Instead the stress has become placed in regard to election upon the individual rather than the community, and as a result of this, baptism tends also to be understood individualistically. As a result of this, however, questions are raised which are beyond the New Testament context of thought. In this respect, however, it is just to note that Calvin by his emphasis that baptism incorporates into the covenant-community does place a check on individualism in this direction. We are not, however, so sure that this covenant-community is directly eschatological - in the sense that the End has already entered history in its life. In both Augustine and Calvin the End is not thought of as having really entered history, and as having committed itself to history. Because of this, history is determined from above and not from the Christ-event - that is the root-cause why the teaching of Augustine and Calvin on predestination is not completely Christocentric.

Summary or Conclusion of the Section upon Calvin

1. The roots of Calvin's predestinarianism are to be found in his emphasis on the direct, all-creating activity of God as witnessed to in the Biblical revelation.
2. Calvin's understanding of the form of the Divine creative activity is not Platonic as was Augustine's, and this is the basic cause of many of their differences in detail.
3. Calvin held that all creation is directly dependent upon the gracious activity of God. This grace has three main modes of operation: there is general grace to which all creatures owe their being and capacities, a "medium quiddam" by which a covenant-community is called into being through which God's redemptive purposes operate, and finally salvific grace which ensures the salvation of the individual.
4. A doctrine of double predestination is taught by Calvin, though reprobation is not so greatly stressed as the positive side of the doctrine. Election is to Christ, because of Christ and mediated through Him, but such election in no way finds its origin in His incarnate activity.
5. An inner tension is to be found in Calvin's doctrine of the Holy Spirit in that he maintains that the elect are only brought to Christ by the secret working of the Spirit, and yet also that members of Christ only receive the Spirit through Him.
6. Sacraments are given to us because of our earthly weakness in order to make the Word visible. They, however, only

become effective in a saving manner when there is added to them the inner working of the Spirit.

7. Calvin gives a more intelligible description than Augustine of the effect of baptism by itself in maintaining that by the rite one is incorporated into the covenant-community.

8. Election to salvation, however, is primarily individualistically conceived by Calvin rather than corporately. When, however, the secret working of the Spirit is added to baptism, the individual is brought into the fullness of Christ, as saving grace is one and indivisible in its operation.

9. The stress on the covenant-community provides a certain counter-balance to individualism in the thought of Calvin, but this community is thought of rather in terms of the "people of God" in the Old Testament rather than that of the "eschatological congregation" in the New.

10. Eschatology for Calvin is primarily centred upon the individual and rest in heaven, rather than upon the corporate resurrection of the "eschatological congregation" and cosmic restoration.

11. The difference in understanding of both baptism and predestination in Augustine and Calvin from that of the New Testament is due to their failure to consider the Church as the "eschatological congregation" in which the powers of the End are already at work.

12. The basic fault of both Augustine's and Calvin's understanding of predestination was their inability to comprehend that the End has been "inaugurated" within history, and that, therefore, history was determined not only from above but also by the Christ-event and its consequences.

Conclusion

In our study of the relationship of predestination and baptism in the teaching of St. Augustine and Calvin we have seen that both theologians stressed these two elements within the Christian faith, but were yet scarcely able to bring them into a truly harmonious and positive relationship with each other. In the theologies of Augustine and Calvin, predestination became the dominant motif, and because of this neither writer was able to do full justice to the New Testament teaching upon baptism. Both men would have found difficulty in accepting the apparent import of such a text as Gal. 3:27. In order to adjust the doctrine of baptism to his predestinarian teaching, Augustine was forced to maintain that baptism by itself only gave an indelible status not necessarily of salvific value, while even when it was received in true faith it only conferred the forgiveness of sins but in no way incorporated the believer into the fullness of Christ, for the grace of final perseverance was given apart from and independent of the sacrament. In order to harmonize the two theological motifs Augustine was obliged to divide grace into graces. Calvin on the other hand refused to take this step; only those who predestinated to glory received any grace at all, though it was possible for others by baptism to be incorporated into the covenant-people of God comprising both elect and non-elect, through which God performed His salvific purposes within the world. Strictly speaking then, baptism according to Calvin did not incorporate "into Christ" at all, but only into the sphere of

Christ's corporate activity.

When we turn to the New Testament we find, however, that though both motifs are present, there is no apparent tension between them. They exist in harmony with each other as facets of the Church's understanding of itself as the "eschatological congregation". We saw that in the New Testament there were two main strands of teaching on predestination, both of which arose out of the Church's eschatological consciousness. The first strand, found primarily in St. Paul, is centred upon the corporate electing activity of God in history to bring about the End which has already proleptically arrived in Jesus Christ. It deals with the redemptive providence of God in relation to His people. The other strand which is found in the Johannine writings stresses the fact that in Jesus Christ the End has already entered history, and thus it continually confronts and divides men. The final judgment with all its eternal significance is already at work within history as men confront Jesus Christ. Both strands, however, arise out of the primitive Church's consciousness of itself as the "eschatological congregation" in whose life the End is already inaugurated, though it is still to be completely revealed.

The New Testament understanding of baptism is another facet of the eschatological consciousness of the early community. By baptism, the individual is made a partaker of the fullness of Christ, he is incorporated into the life of the "eschatological

congregation", shares in the corporate gift of the Spirit and the sanctification which pertains to the reconstituted people of God called out in the last times. The eschatological understanding of Augustine and Calvin is different - the End is neither thought of as impending nor as inaugurated. Furthermore, it is the individual rather than the congregation who is vis-à-vis the End. The stress is placed on how the individual will fare at the judgment, or upon his future partaking of the rest in Christ rather than upon any kind of cosmic restoration. A change in eschatological understanding is the root of the difference between the relationships of baptism and predestination in Augustine and Calvin as compared with that of the New Testament.

In both theologians we saw that their understanding of predestination was based upon their doctrine of creation. The form of the Augustinian doctrine of creation was Platonic - creation is the determined outworking in time of the eternal ideas in the mind of God. In Calvin, the doctrine of creation is different as it is founded upon the all-causal activity of God depicted within the Old Testament. We must ask, however, whether a Christian doctrine of predestination should be based upon such understandings of creation. It is generally accepted that in the history of Israel, the distinctive Judaic understanding of creation arose out of reflection upon the redemptive activity of God, rather than that it was a pre-supposition held prior to that activity, and in relation to which the redemptive act was interpreted.

The Old Testament doctrine of creation is the cosmological backing to the events of the Exodus and the return from the Babylonian exile; it is the interpretation of these happenings in terms of cosmology. In the case of Calvin, we have to ask whether it is right to interpret the New Testament understanding of election against the background of the Old Testament doctrine of creation. Is there not a Christian understanding of creation which fulfils that of the Old Testament, just as the New Testament teaching on salvation fulfils that of the Old? Has not the Church to formulate its doctrine of creation from its understanding of the salvation achieved in Jesus Christ, just as Israel arrived at its conviction concerning creation by reflection upon the mighty acts of God within its own history?

It may be asked whether such a cosmological reading-back of the Christian understanding of salvation is either legitimate or necessary. The answer to this is found partly in pointing out the alternatives: if the cosmological basis of Christianity is neglected, we are left only with a form of Marcionitism in which Christ becomes a "stranger-god" to this world. Moreover, the Church has always claimed Christ to be the fulfilment of the Old Testament, and that book possessed a definite cosmological understanding. In the light of the full Christian revelation we must affirm that in certain ways that understanding must be revised, but we cannot accept the radical discontinuity of denying the necessity for such a construction. The greatest attempt in

the Early Church to understand creation in terms of the redemption achieved in Jesus Christ was that of Irenaeus, and it is unfortunate that more of the Fathers did not follow his lead in this respect. After Origen, however, it tended to become the fashion to interpret creation platonically in terms of the Logos-doctrine, and as a result there was not available for Augustine a specifically Christian doctrine of creation with which to connect his teaching on predestination. A truly Christian doctrine of creation must find its basis in the understanding of the eschatological significance of the Christ-event. It must be founded upon the recognition that in Jesus Christ the End has truly entered history, though it is as yet not fully revealed. Thus, the End has already been inaugurated within history in the life of the Church and is already at work under historical forms. This statement, however, must necessarily be modified by the recognition of the significance of the Ascension of our Lord - that Christ is not only at work within the Church but above and beside the Church as well, though these activities must be considered as one in nature and in purpose.

This in turn leads on to the question of the relationship between the doctrine of predestination and Christology. In recent years, Karl Barth, in particular, has stressed this relationship, charging the classical exponents of the former doctrine of lacking in Christocentricity by the emphasis they placed on the hidden decrees of God behind and above the incarnate work of

Christ.[1] We have seen, however, that neither in Augustine nor Calvin is the work of predestination denied to the eternal Son, though both imply that the incarnation is the instrument of that predestination rather than being in any way determinative of it. This in turn raises another Christological problem: what is the relationship between the eternal Son and the incarnate Christ? Neither Augustine nor Calvin give any direct answer to this question. We can, however, reasonably speculate in what direction their answer would be found. Augustine, in line with his Platonic pre-suppositions would have argued that the incarnate activity of the Son was the temporal outworking of the eternal plan for the salvation of the elect. Calvin, on the other hand, may have used the concept afterwards developed by the Reformed scholastics of the "extra Calvinisticum" - the idea that the Logos possessed a double life being at the same time "totus extra Jesum" and "totus in Jesu".[2] Whatever method Augustine or Calvin may have used to meet this problem one thing is certain, in no way has the Divine predestination become an actor within history, even though the salvation of man is achieved through the Incarnation. History is still determined from without and not from within. The great danger behind this kind of thinking is

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1. See for a long discussion of this, Church Dogmatics, II/2. Barth's position in relation to the doctrine of predestination is found concisely expounded in his pamphlet Gottes Gnadenwahl (Munich, 1936).

2. See for a short description of the "extra Calvinisticum" as treated by the Reformed divines, A.B. Bruce, The Humiliation of Christ (2nd ed., Edinburgh, 1881), pp.125-8.

the tendency to suggest that God is not specially present in the Incarnation - why should it so be thought if that event is equally determined from the outside as every other happening within history? It is highly probable that the exemplarism of the Abelardian doctrine of the atonement finds its source in such a tendency. Here, we recall his argument that there is no reason why God should pay a ransom to the devil, as the elect were never within the devil's power. If predestination is so stressed, nothing can actually be achieved by the atonement, but the death of Christ can only be regarded as an example which draws people to the love of God. This is, of course, an extreme example of the tendency, but it does reveal the danger which exists in relating the incarnate work of our Lord to an understanding of creation which does not find its basis in reflection upon this same theme.

Is it possible, however, to build a theology of creation out of the eschatological Christ-event? In this connection we have already mentioned the work of Irenaeus who in his doctrine of ἀνακεφαλαίωσις teaches that man at the first was not created mature, but it was only by the coming of Christ that he is brought to this state, as well as being at the same time delivered from sin and corruption. A more modern attempt to found a doctrine of creation upon the historic Christ-event has been made by Karl Barth in his striking re-interpretation of supra-lapsarianism.[1] He argues that it is God's supreme intention

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1. Church Dogmatics II/2 (E.T.), pp.140-5.

to reveal Himself in His glory to man, and in order that this may be possible it is necessary for man to know what God wills and what He does not will. In order that the latter as well as the former may be known, evil is permitted by God.[1] At the same time, it is God's will that man should recognize Him as a merciful redeemer upon Whom he depends for everything, and therefore evil is permitted in order that it may be finally overcome by Jesus Christ.[2] Thus the whole of creation including evil is ordained so that Christ might finally perform His saving work. Here we have two very different theologies of creation seeking to find their centre in the historic Christ-event. Both are open to criticism, but it must be recognized that both seek to formulate a genuine Christian doctrine of creation. Only if we do this, will it be possible for us to view creation and redemption as basically the same Divine activity, and be saved from such incongruities as that of Calvin when he makes a sharp division between the work of the Holy Spirit in creation and His secret saving work in men's hearts.

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1. "And it is inevitable that this confrontation with what God repudiates, with evil, should mean for man, who is certainly not God and not almighty, that evil confronts him as a hostile power, a power which is, in fact, greater than his own power." op. cit., p.141.

2. "God wills 'homo labilis', not in order that he may fall, but in order that when he has fallen he may testify to the fullness of God's glory. And His willing and election of 'homo labilis', not for the fall, but for uplifting and restitution by an act of divine power." op. cit., pp.141f.

It was a great misfortune that during the classical period of discussion concerning the person of Christ, so many pre-suppositions should have been founded upon an alien doctrine of creation, and so little attention paid to the New Testament understanding of Jesus as the eschatological fulfiller. In the end, those taking part in the Christological controversies seem to have realized that the Logos-doctrine was so inherently tainted with subordinationism as not to be a really serviceable tool. However perverse may be some of Werner's arguments, we cannot deny his main charge that the eschatological understanding of the Church in the fourth century was very different from that of New Testament times. This is not to say that we accept his argument that a heightened Christology arose as a compensation for an attenuated eschatological consciousness. A Christology which looked at Jesus as the eschatological fulfiller would be no less "high" than one which regarded Him as the Logos incarnate. The early Arians do not seem to have been the last upholders of a primitive "angel Christology" but rather left-wing Origenists who unduly stressed the subordination of the Logos to the Father. Those who hold that the eschatological fulfilment has already been inaugurated by the historic mission of Jesus cannot help but hold a "high" Christology.[1]

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1. Werner's study is vitiated in this respect in that he accepts Schweitzer's conception of the ministry of Jesus not as inaugurating the End, but as a preparation for the future coming of the Son of Man. This fact sways his interpretation throughout his study.

The Church's understanding of baptism also suffered because its failure to regard itself as the "eschatological congregation" - the society which looked forward with expectancy to the manifestation of the End, and in whose life the powers of the End were already at work. Questions concerning personal achievement are not of the highest importance when one believes one is living on the eve of Judgment Day, but rather the knowledge that one is within the immediate sphere of God's saving activity. Once, however, the End recedes further into the future, the stress becomes more and more placed upon individual achievement and discipline within the society of the Church. Baptism then begins to be thought of not so much as conferring a new life but rather a new start. The relationship between predestination and baptism becomes centred upon the individual rather than upon the Christian community. It is true that Calvin probably possessed a deeper understanding of the corporate nature of baptism than did Augustine - but the society into which, according to him, one was incorporated by baptism was modelled upon the "people of God" in the Old Testament rather than on the community upon whom the ends of ages have come in the New.

The question how we should relate the doctrines of predestination and baptism to the Church in present-day theological construction is beyond the scope of this study. What we would point out, however, is that such construction depends for its value on to what extent it takes into account the peculiar

eschatological orientation of the New Testament. In this study we have attempted to show that the varying relations between the doctrines of baptism and predestination in Augustine and Calvin when compared with that of the New Testament really arose out of a different eschatological perspective. Unfortunately, at the present time there seems to be no generally-accepted understanding of New Testament eschatology in theological circles, and hence no really successful retranslation of it into terms which are readily intelligible to the Church today. Because of this, the temptation will be in any reconstruction of the doctrines of baptism and predestination to neglect the factor provided by the eschatological consciousness of the New Testament. Perhaps such a reconstruction may be possible, but our contention is that it will find itself in the same tensions which have marked the work of the classical exponents of these doctrines, because it has been erected out of basically the same materials. A satisfactory relationship between the doctrines of baptism and predestination will only be gained when they are related to the consciousness of the primitive Church of itself as the "eschatological congregation" out of which they took their origin. Before, however, this can be done, it will be necessary for us to retranslate intelligibly the eschatological thought-forms of the New Testament to ourselves.

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ABSTRACT

A Study in Augustine and Calvin of the Church Regarded as the Number of the Elect and as the Body of the Baptized

Preface

Brief justification for the writing of the study.

Chapter I: The earlier teaching of St. Augustine on grace and election

This chapter traces St. Augustine's earlier thought on grace and election, showing its gradual development until his mature position is reached in De Diversis Quaestionibus ad Simplicianum in 397. The basic Augustinian position on the nature of grace was arrived at long before the stresses of the Pelagian controversy.

Chapter II: St. Augustine's mature teaching on grace and predestination

The mature Augustinian teaching on predestination is founded on his understanding of God as the eternal determiner of all events within the temporal world. Though the Eternal Son takes part in the work of predestination, this anterior decision is only mediated, not determined by the incarnate work of Christ. The difficulty in Augustinian thought over the question of "sufficient" grace.

Chapter III: Baptism and grace in the teaching of St. Augustine

Baptism according to Augustine gives the recipient an indelible status and incorporates him into the visible Church. Generally speaking, Augustine would affirm that baptism was necessary for salvation, though in his anti-Donatist writings

he admits exceptions to this rule. Salvation, however, is really in the power of the Spirit, Who draws to baptism, confers faith and gives final perseverance. Baptism apart from these does not avail for salvation.

Chapter IV: Predestination and election in the Western Fathers till the time of Augustine

Election is one of the prime motifs of the theology of the New Testament arising out of the Church's understanding of itself as the eschatological congregation. There are two main strands of teaching on this matter: (a) Pauline, which emphasizes the initiative of the redemptive providence in history leading to the fulfilment of the promises in Christ, and (b) Johannine, which stresses the eschatological finality of the mission of Christ, and how by it the final judgment continually confronts men within history. In post-apostolic Christianity the former strand seems dominant, but by the end of the second century the whole matter is relegated to the region of philosophical prologomena to the faith. Idea of predestination was brought back into Christian thinking by Victorinus, a Christian Platonist of the fourth century.

Chapter V: The development of the understanding of baptism from New Testament times till St. Augustine in the Western Church

In New Testament times, the basic understanding of baptism was that it incorporated the individual into the fullness of Christ, Who was truly present by the power of His Spirit in the "eschatological congregation". Afterwards, for a variety of reasons, baptism comes

to be regarded as conferring certain specific gifts, but not necessarily bringing the individual into the fullness of Christ. The disintegration of the unified understanding of baptism found in the New Testament led to its domination in the thought of Augustine by his predestinarian teaching.

Chapter VI: Eschatology from New Testament times to Augustine

The eschatological motif is dominant throughout the New Testament writings. This eschatology is both "futuristic" and "inaugurated", primarily orientated corporately and cosmically towards the "parousia" rather than being centred on the individual and his destiny. This hope is still present in the post-apostolic age, but is now mainly futuristically conceived, and the earlier understanding of "inaugurated" eschatology tends to disappear. Afterwards, though the chiliastic tradition still continues especially in the West, other forms of interpretation enter the Church's thinking on this matter. Origenism tended to spiritualize and individualize the Christian hope, while others like Eusebius interpreted eschatological symbols as applying to the life of the Church in this world. Except for certain occasions, generally in close proximity to times of persecution, the Church ceased to understand itself as the "eschatological congregation" in whose life the powers of the End are at work. Augustine appears when there is no predominant tradition in the Church to which he might feel bound to conform.

Chapter VII: Eschatology and Platonism in St. Augustine

Most of the traditional eschatological symbols are to be found in the teaching of St. Augustine. His teaching, however, is mainly centred on individual destiny, while the cosmic symbol of the Millenium is interpreted of the Church's life in this world. Augustine rejects the possibility of a Platonic "realized eschatology" by the ascent through intellectual vision to the realm of ideas. Augustine's doctrine is in form reminiscent of that of Plotinus, and raises difficulties especially when he tries to relate it to the grace brought by the Incarnation. Because Augustine can only conceive of the temporal world as being determined by the eternal ideas, he cannot in any way think of history as being determined from within by the Incarnation, and hence fails to do justice to the eschatological significance of that event.

Chapter VIII: Predestination and Election in the teaching of Calvin

The doctrine of predestination is not the basis of Calvin's theology but an essential element within it. The doctrine arises out of Calvin's understanding of God as the all-controlling creator - an insight which is pressed to the extent of placing all secondary causation in an ambiguous position. All human capabilities are the work of the Holy Spirit, but the saving grace of the Spirit is indivisible and only given to the elect. Calvin teaches a doctrine of double-predestination, and he, like Augustine, does not make the incarnate mission of Christ a determining factor

in election.

Chapter IX: Calvin's understanding of Baptism

Outline of Calvin's general sacramental position showing that he regarded the sacraments as the seals to the promises of God, which could truly convey the Divine presence, though this was in no way inextricably attached to the sign. The efficacy of the sacrament depends upon the secret working of the Spirit, Who can work independently of the sacrament if necessary. By baptism one is incorporated into the covenant-people of God through which the Divine saving purposes are performed. Faith, the gift of the Spirit, however, is necessary for the sacrament to be efficacious.

Chapter X: Calvin's Eschatological Teaching

Calvin opposed chiliastic expectations and calculations of the time of the End, preferring to generalize eschatological symbols and treat them as referring to the life of the Church in the world. Since the coming of Christ the Church has been living in the last times, and the Kingdom is not only future but present when the Spirit assists the Word in the hearts of the elect. There is a tendency in Calvin to denigrate physical existence, and his eschatology is centred rather upon rest with Christ in heaven than cosmic restoration, and there is no real understanding of the Church as the "eschatological congregation".

Chapter XI: The Teaching of Augustine and Calvin on Predestination, Baptism, and Eschatology compared

1. Predestination

Many close similarities in thought between the writers are traced, but also certain dissimilarities are found, especially concerning (a) free-will, (b) operating and co-operating grace, and (c) the indivisibility of grace. A deeper difference between the writers is found in Calvin's refusal to accept Augustine's understanding of evil as the negation of being.

2. Baptism

Outline of the different factors which affected the structure of the baptismal theology of the two men. Several close similarities: (a) the necessity of the Word for sacramental action, (b) Baptism as delivering from the guilt not the power of sin. Differences concern: (a) the indivisibility of grace, (b) the necessity of baptism, (c) validity and efficacy. On the whole, Calvin gives a more intelligible account concerning what baptism does than Augustine.

3. Eschatology

Similarities between the two writers: (a) interpretation of the Millenium, (b) tendency to neglect cosmic elements, (c) individual orientation, (d) no real understanding of the Church as the "eschatological congregation". The differences, however, in all these three aspects of thought can be traced to Calvin's rejection of Augustine's Platonism.

Chapter XII: Conclusion

The difference between the relationship of predestination and baptism in Augustine and Calvin when compared with that of the New Testament can be traced to a change in eschatological understanding. The predestinarian teaching of both theologians was based on doctrines of creation which were not fully Christian. If one's understanding of predestination is based on such a doctrine it tends to threaten Christology. The necessity in any future theological construction that Christ should be seen once again as the eschatological fulfiller and the Church as the "eschatological congregation".