Exploring the Exuberant Abundance of Seeing-Knowing, Hoping, and Doing: A Proposal for a Social Trinitarian Praxis

by

Loys de Fleuriot de la Colinière

A Doctoral Thesis submitted to the Faculty of Knox College and the Graduate Centre for Theological Studies of the Toronto School of Theology. In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Theological Studies awarded by Knox College and the University of Toronto

© Copyright by Loys de Fleuriot de la Colinière 2019
Abstract

The Continuing violence in the contemporary world prompts a re-focus on the importance of the way we see-know and hope in or with the other/s and how that might affect our doing with or for the other/s. This study’s thesis statement takes up these introductory ideas from Jürgen Moltmann’s *The Way of Jesus Christ* where he writes,

> The resurrection of Christ is historically understood in the fullest sense only in ‘the unity of knowing, hoping, and doing’. …. Anyone who talks about Christ’s resurrection from the dead and who believes in the power of God to raise the dead is talking in a single breath about the foundation, the future, and the praxis of the liberation of human beings and the redemption of the world. This means that what we can know historically about Christ’s resurrection must not be abstracted from the questions: what can we hope from it? and what must we do in its name?

Given the implications of these statements and questions, the three central chapters of this study explore the effect of ‘exuberant abundance’ (or ‘surplus’) in the cross and resurrection event. These chapters examine this effect through an open, ongoing process of discerning the ‘tensioned-struggled’ *turn to the other/s* in three core ‘journeys’ of *seeing-knowing* (chapter 2), *hoping* (chapter 3), and *doing* (chapter 4) in humanity and creation. This study’s explorative journeys search for interanimative responses that yield a contribution to peace and justice. With Moltmann’s key citation in mind, these explorations look to engage various important authors constructively and creatively (e.g., in the disciplines of hermeneutical philosophy, cognitive psychology, and socio-psychology). In *Chapter 5*, I ask the reader to consider the tensioned unity-across-diversity of the three core journeys and how these may relate to the three-fold ‘themes or tasks’ of this study. First, in Christ’s *mission* of faith, hope, and love in and with the world. Second, in a *public theology* of embrace of all through Christ’s hope in and with the other/s, and third, in a *personally experienced theology* made possible in the ‘Pentecost’ energies of the Holy Spirit of the resurrection.
Abstrait

La persistance de la violence dans le monde contemporain invite à se recentrer de nouveau sur l’importance de la façon dont nous voyons-savons et espérons dans ou avec l’autre/autres et comment cela pourrait affecter notre façon de faire avec ou pour l’autre/autres. La thèse de cette étude reprend ces idées introductives du Chemin de Jésus-Christ de Jürgen Moltmann où il écrit,

La résurrection du Christ est historiquement comprise dans le plein sens seulement dans l’unité de savoir, d’espérer et de faire. … Quiconque parle de la résurrection du Christ d’entre les morts et croit en la puissance de Dieu pour ressusciter les morts parle d’un seul souffle de la fondation, de l’avenir et de la praxis de la libération des êtres humains et de la rédemption du monde. Cela signifie que ce que nous pouvons connaître historiquement de la résurrection de Christ ne doit pas être abstrait des questions: que pouvons-nous en espérer? et que devons-nous faire en son nom?

Acknowledgments

“If we had a keen vision and feeling of all ordinary human life, it would be like hearing the grass grow and the squirrel’s heartbeat, and we should die of that roar which lies on the other side of silence” (George Eliot, Middlemarch)

Abraham Heschel once wrote, “There can be no authenticity to human existence without a sense of indebtedness” (or as I see it, ‘of gratitude’). I am indebted to God for his mercy, grace, and love; to Sharon, my wife, for her love and friendship. I am indebted to my two mentors in the academy who have given me a love for the Reformed tradition (as also did Dr. Michael Eaton [1942-2017]). Professor Willem Saayman (1942-2015) connected me to Professor Charles Fensham and Knox College, University of Toronto. They have both guided me as faithful supervisors. They concealed their theological views behind their teachings to allow me to develop more authentically in the leading of the Holy Spirit for my life. I am indebted to Professor John A. Vissers and Professor Nik Ansell, who together with Charles Fensham have formed my thesis committee. I thank them for their time, advice, and care. I am indebted to Professor Ronald A. Kuipers, President of the Institute of Christian Studies, for his early involvement and support, and to Professor Thomas E. Reynolds, Vice-Principal of Emmanuel College, for his mentorship and early guidance to my research. I am grateful to Professor Joseph G. Schner S.J. for introducing me to the psychology of Shellie H. Levine, and to my examiner from the University of Toronto School of Graduate Studies, Professor Reid Locklin, for his support. I am indebted also to my external examiner, Professor Reinerio Arce-Valentin, Rector of the Seminario Evangélico de Teología, Cuba, for his involvement in my process. I appreciated receiving his exhortation that there can be no peace without justice, and his appeal that we hear even the distant cry of victims for justice; for retributive justice; for the conversion of perpetrators, and his appeal against structural sin.

I am grateful to Jürgen Moltmann, Paul Ricoeur, Nicolas Berdyaev, Christoph F. Blumhardt, Shellie H. Levine, Miroslav Volf, and Søren Kierkegaard for their thinking and writings. Their words have helped me breathe in wide spaces. I am particularly grateful to Jürgen Moltmann for his social trinitarian theology. I agree with Wolfhart Pannenberg that new trinitarian thinking begins with Moltmann’s Trinity and the Kingdom which he wrote at the end of the ‘70s.

These, all, have reminded me that the Holy Spirit’s breath is in our ears both within and alongside—who makes intercession as recorded in Romans 8:26. They have helped me search for a closeness to the poor in the words of Matthew 25:35-40. They have helped me search for responses to the ongoing conflicts and polarized thinking and actions in the world. They have helped me carry a prophetic concern and to search for the meaning of Jesus’ words to his disciples recorded in Matthew 18:1-6 ‘to be as the child.’ Also, finally, they have informed my search for God’s love in the earth that takes place in the ‘roar’ on the ‘other side of silence.’

Loys

29th November 2018
Contents

CHAPTER 1—Introduction

1/1—Introduction of some Terms and Concepts Employed ................................................. 2
1/2—Personal Motivation and Method .................................................................................. 9
1/3—Further Development of the ‘How Much More’ ............................................................ 15
1/4—Secondary Conversation Partners ............................................................................. 19
1/5—Research Method ........................................................................................................ 21
1/6—Structure of Chapters .................................................................................................. 22

CHAPTER 2—Seeing and Knowing

2/1—Setting the Ground ....................................................................................................... 27
  2/1/1—Seeing and Knowing Jesus in Humility .................................................................. 27
  2/1/2—The Potential of Facing the other/s in Humility ...................................................... 29
  2/1/3—The Potential of Seeing and Knowing from within the Godforsaken Abyss .......... 30
  2/1/4—Brief Comments on a Faith Seeing and Knowing Through Despair ................. 34
  2/1/5—Seeing and Knowing of Faith as an Awakening by the Holy Spirit ..................... 36

2/2—The Journey of Seeing and Knowing the other/s through the Christ-event .......... 39
  2/2/1—Imprisonment and Hope ....................................................................................... 39
  2/2/2—Seeing and Knowing in Conversation with Moltmann’s Trinitarian Christology ...... 45
  2/2/3—Seeing and Knowing through the Tragedy of God’s Passionate Love ............... 48
  2/2/4—Further Comments on the ‘word of the cross’ as Christ’s Work on Earth ........... 53
  2/2/5—Aspects of a Personal Journey in Seeing and Knowing the other/s ...................... 55
  2/2/6—Seeing and Knowing through Ecclesiological Humility ........................................ 56
  2/2/7—Seeing and Knowing through Suspending Dichotomy ......................................... 59

2/3—Assessments ................................................................................................................. 61

CHAPTER 3—Hoping .............................................................................................................. 64

Schematics of the Chapter in Context .................................................................................. 67

3/1—‘Hope’, in Levine’s Psychology of Children’s Cognition ............................................. 70
  3/1/1—Fundamental Aspects and Motivations .................................................................. 71
  3/1/2—Salient Differences with Aristotelian-Piagetian Logic ........................................... 73
  3/1/3—Some Further Assessments of Levine’s Approach ................................................ 76

3/2—Ricoeur’s ‘Hope’ in Initial Conversation with Moltmann .......................................... 79

3/3—Moltmann’s ‘Hope’ in Conversation with Levine and Ricoeur ................................. 89
3/4—Assessments ......................................................................................................................... 100

CHAPTER 4—Doing ..................................................................................................................... 101

4/1—An Interanimative Exploration of a *Theology of Embrace* in Moltmann and Volf... 107
  4/1/1—The Cross’s *Embrace of Perpetrator* in Volf ................................................................. 110
  4/1/2—Moltmann’s Social Trinitarian Theology of Embrace ..................................................... 112
  4/1/3—Volf’s *Embrace of the Perpetrator* in Conversation with Moltmann’s *Embrace of the
Victim* .......................................................................................................................................... 115

4/2—A Humble and Courageous Trinitarian-Doxological Embrace at the ‘Public Margins’
.................................................................................................................................................... 121
  4/2/1—The Embrace of God’s Love as ‘Picking up our Cross’ and Turning to the ‘Public
Margins’ ......................................................................................................................................... 123
  4/2/2—The *Doing* of Love as Humble ‘Embrace’ in the Symbol of ‘Foot-washing’ .............. 126
  4/2/3—Embrace as a *Conversion* to Love at the Public Margins ........................................... 128

4/3—Assessments .......................................................................................................................... 131

CHAPTER 5—Conclusion .............................................................................................................. 133

  5/1—The Community of Christ as a Social Trinitarian Tensioned Unity-Across-Diversity
..................................................................................................................................................... 136

  5/2—Transitional Elements and Links to Possible Future Continuations ............................. 137

  5/3—The Three Themes or Tasks in Relationship with the Three Core Journeys .......... 139
    5/3/1—*Evangelism* in Relationship with the Three Core Journeys ....................................... 140
    5/3/2—*Public Engagement* in Relationship with the Three Core Journeys ..................... 141
    5/3/3—*Personal Experience* in Relationship with the Three Core Journeys .................. 143

Bibliography .................................................................................................................................. 147

Primary Resources—Books, Parts of Books, and Articles ......................................................... 147

Secondary Resources—Books, Parts of Books, and Articles .................................................... 148
CHAPTER 1—Introduction

The continuing violence in the contemporary world prompts a re-focus on the importance of the way we see-know and hope in or with the other/s, and how that might affect our doing with or for the other/s. This study’s thesis statement takes up these introductory ideas from Jürgen Moltmann’s The Way of Jesus Christ where he writes,

The resurrection of Christ is historically understood in the fullest sense only in ‘the unity of knowing, hoping, and doing’. …. Anyone who talks about Christ’s resurrection from the dead and who believes in the power of God to raise the dead is talking in a single breath about the foundation, the future, and the praxis of the liberation of human beings and the redemption of the world. This means that what we can know historically about Christ’s resurrection must not be abstracted from the questions: what can we hope from it? and what must we do in its name?¹

Given the implications of these statements and these questions, I wish to examine the effect of the idea and experience of ‘exuberant abundance’ (or ‘surplus’) in the cross-resurrection event through an open, ongoing deepening process of discerning the ‘tensioned-struggled’ turn to the other/s in three core ‘journeys’ of seeing-knowing, hoping, and doing in human and creational life.² This study illuminates this


² I describe the word ‘surplus’ in more existential-dynamic terms as ‘the exuberant-abundant excess of God’s life over death in the cross-resurrection event’. I understand that this is an alteration of its accepted use in Eurocentric philosophy and theology. Moltmann uses the German word ‘Überschuß’ for the idea of superabundant surplus, which broadly speaking articulates that ‘Christ’s resurrection has an added value and a surplus of promise over Christ’s death...’ (Way, 186). My use of the words ‘exuberant abundance’, therefore, always tries to capture the combination of the idea and experience of ‘surplus’ and ‘superabundance’ implicit in the word ‘Überschuß’. Moltmann also references here Ricoeur who takes up the idea of a ‘logic of superabundant overflow’ via Romans 8:34 in The Conflict of Interpretations: Essays in Hermeneutics, ed. by Don Ihde (Northwestern University Press, c1974, 2007), 402f. Ricoeur also uses the French word ‘le surplus’ in his hermeneutical development of the ‘surplus of meaning’ (le surplus de l’être) into ‘surplus of being’ (le surplus de l’étant) – see La Métaphore Vive (Paris, FR: Seuil, 1975), 377-379; Le Conflit des Interprétations: Essais D’herméneutique (Paris, FR: Seuil, 1969), Partie 1, the chapter titled, “Structure et Herméneutique”). For Ricoeur’s use of ‘surplus’ as the ‘how much more’ of Romans 5:20 and for his taking up a ‘tensioned theology’ of hope in the ‘not yet’ and ‘in spite of’ – see Figuring the Sacred: Religion, Narrative, and Imagination, trans. by David Pellauer, ed. by Mark I. Wallace (Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Fortress Press, 1995), 205. For Moltmann’s use of the idea and experience of a surplus of hope in the ‘not yet’ – see The Theology of Hope: On the Ground and the Implications of a Christian Eschatology, trans. by James W. Leitch (New York, NY: Harper & Row Publishers, 1967), 18f, 68f). For the political and liberative aspects of a ‘surplus’ of hope, Moltmann also draws on Ernst Bloch’s The Principle of Hope, trans. by Neville Plaice, Stephen Plaice, and Paul Knight (Oxford, UK: Basil Blackwell, Ltd., 1986). Moltmann draws from Bloch’s materialism and the historical influence of the Jewish writings for the objective elements of his theology of hope in surplus. In this sense, we cannot reduce his theology of exuberant-abundant hope in the resurrection to overemphasized subjective experiences (as does Rudolf Bultmann’s existentialism). I also take up with Moltmann and Ricoeur a logic and theology of ‘exuberant-abundant hope’ (or ‘surplus’) through the resurrection that stands partly in contrast to the logic of scarcity that undergirds Bloch’s ‘principle of hope’. Space does not allow for an exploration of Moltmann and Bloch’s
The following explorations engage in a creative and constructive commentary that reflects on this theme of Moltmann’s theology in conversation with several authors. I try thus to construct a way or journey that hopes to obtain responses for peace in the world. With Moltmann’s key citation in mind, I engage these various important authors in the idea and experience of exuberant abundance (or surplus) through a discerning and tensioned interanimative³ ‘dance’ of the three related journeys. We could phrase these three related journeys as follows: 1) how can we see or know the other/s. 2) how may we hope in or with the other/s, and 3) what must we do with or for the other/s.

Before continuing to my method and structure, I would like to clarify some of the terms and concepts that will often occur throughout the explorations that follow.

1/1—Introduction of some Terms and Concepts Employed

I use the word ‘journey’ to describe the three-fold explorations into our seeing-knowing, hoping, and doing to open the possibility of an ongoing ‘passage of peace’ for discernment through the dynamic language of a ‘theologia viae’ (a theology ‘on the way’) with or for the other/s. Given that this is my aim, I hope that a constructive, discursive, and dynamic dimension will make room for clarity to come through that may inform questions and concerns for the sake of a world of peace.

Moltmann’s trinitarian theology of the cross and resurrection references the ‘tensioned turn to other’ as the tensional dynamic in God who, in the agony of love, turns to his ‘other’—his counterpart, the human, to save humanity from sin and death and for new-creational life in the Spirit of Christ.⁴ I argue that God reveals in this ‘tensioned turn to other’ the character of divine love as the passion and longing for the other/s. This ‘divine love as the passion,’ translated into sociological terms, opens into the idea that ‘the acceptance of others creates community in diversity’. In this sense also, the other is no longer the easily

---

³ My use of ‘interanimative’ is as a ‘giving of mutual life’ also expressed as an ‘interactivity’. See also section 1/1.

⁴ I take up the ecumenical consensus today on the theology of religions which means taking up a theological view that knows of no other way but the way of Jesus Christ, but that does not presume to judge on behalf of God as to what this means for all others. I wish to make clear at the outset of this study that I am not looking at a coercive understanding of the cross and resurrection event in its impact. I acknowledge that there are many ways that we may understand Christ. In this regard, Moltmann writes, “If the cosmic Spirit is the Spirit of God, the universe cannot be viewed as a closed system. It has to be understood as a system that is open—open for God and for his future” (God in Creation: A New Theology of Creation and the Spirit of God, trans. by Margaret Kohl (New York, NY: Harper & Row Publishing, 1985), 103). The “Reports of the Sections -- Section I: Turning to the Living God,” International Review of Mission 78 (July-October 1989), 351, states that “…we cannot set limits to the saving power of God.” For Moltmann’s eschatological trinitarian panentheism which he sets up in contrast to illusions of pantheism and pan-nihilism, see God in, 103, and The Spirit of Life: A Universal Affirmation, trans. by Margaret Kohl (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2001), 211-213; see also Bauckham, The Theology of Jürgen Moltmann (Edinburgh, UK: T&T Clark Ltd., 1995), 242-247.
rejected ‘alien’ or the ‘threat’ or the ‘foreigner’ or the ‘enemy.’ Moltmann’s core citation thus informs in this thesis the work of divine love fundamental to human existence as the ‘surplus’ of hope that comes through the Spirit of Christ in the ‘tension of love’ of facing the other.

The word, ‘surplus’, unless said otherwise, always implicitly refers to the exuberant abundance of Christ’s resurrection life in the cross-resurrection event. However, because of the tension or crisis of the cross, it is always an ‘exuberant abundance in tension’. It is through the superabundance that flows out of this tension or crisis where we may find both suffering and joy and both suffering and hope. I develop Moltmann and Ricoeur’s use of the word ‘surplus’ into several more dynamic expressions. I take up the idea and experience of ‘surplus’ as expressing a ‘heart’—a heart of hope; a childlike-humble heart; a heart of exuberant abundance; a heart of courageous servanthood; an overflowing of God’s love seen in the cross-resurrection event of Christ’s death for the other/s, and a fullness of givingness. ‘Heart’ here stands for an emotional (“e-motion-al”) motivation for action—that which gives the human agency. I sense that Moltmann implicitly references these broader ideas of ‘exuberant abundance’ or ‘exuberant-abundant excess,’ such as in his references to the ‘how much more’ of Romans 5:10.

It is important to note that because Moltmann sources the ‘surplus of promise’ in the Jewish writings of the Hebrew Bible, and not only in the ‘surplus’ or overflow of life over death in the Christ-event, he takes up a broad understanding of God’s self-revelation to the world. In an imaginative sense, the kind of beauty (through this Divine self-revelation) that I am looking for here is not one that comes from gazing up at the beautiful God. It comes from learning to understand God’s beauty by seeing this beautiful God at work in the broken and despised and forgotten places of humanity and creation. I also sense that Moltmann is still quite Christocentric in his understanding of God’s self-revelation, but that this is an inclusive christocentrism. He bases this ‘inclusive christocentrism’ on the idea following Gerhard von Rad that OT prophecies have multiple fulfillments in history. Moltmann transposes this ‘inclusive christocentrism’ into a tensioned exuberant abundance of ‘excess’ between promise and fulfillment. He is not uncritical of Von Rad’s reduction of the ‘large and dynamic categories’ of the Old and New Testaments to a claim that the Old is Israel’s faith and the New the Christian gospel. The work of the triune God in and through the cross and resurrection is thus for him, not a closed circle, but one revealed to humans as God’s loving act for all humanity and creation.

Moltmann’s core citation focusses on the ‘surplus’ in the resurrection. It thus also opens a dynamic sense of the exuberant abundance of the triune God’s love in the Christ-event. I accept the history that

---

6 See note 2 above.
7 See Moltmann, Way, 242f.
surrounded the word ‘surplus’. Following Moltmann, I take up a search for this ‘exuberant abundance’ (or surplus) not only from the superabundant hope of the triune God’s actions in the cross and resurrection but also from the New Testament writings on Jesus’s life.

We might discern the theme of superabundance (in the form of deed and grace) in the teaching of Jesus recorded in the Gospel accounts of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. Jesus’s actions in the gospels foreshadow such an exuberant-abundant ‘surplus of hope’, such as in the story of the loaves and fishes which records that “…everyone ate and was full (ἐχορτάσθησαν), and they took up twelve baskets full (περισσεύον) of leftover fragments.” Matthew 5:20 brings up the same idea of ‘exuberant abundance’ to indicate an abundant richness and “righteousness that far surpasses…” (περισσεύσῃ). The idea here is of exuberant abundance that speaks to a going beyond to a fullness exceeding the norms as follows: “…and if you greet only your brothers, what more (περισσοῦ) are you doing than others? Do not even the Gentiles do the same? You therefore must be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.” The exuberant-abundant overflow in the word περισσεύω implies an extraordinary amount and an exuberant-abundant profuseness. It references the disciples’ ‘exceedingly’ (περισσῶς) astonished cry to Jesus in Mark 10:26, “Then who can be saved?” To which Jesus replied, “With man it is impossible, but not with God. For all things are possible with God.”

---

9 I am not primarily a New Testament scholar and will thus draw on the support of several New and Old Testament commentators as of several Greek lexicons. The translation of Matthew 14:20 here is by Donald A. Hagner, Matthew 14–28, WBC 33B; Accordance electronic ed. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1995), 414. The combination of ἐχορτάσθησαν and περισσεύον in this verse implies an abundant and overflowing satisfaction, which Hagner ties to the messianic fulfillment of Matthew 5:6 (“for they shall be satisfied (χορτάσθησονται)”), and Psalm 107:9 (“For he satisfies the thirsty and the hungry he fills with good things” LXX) – see Ibid, 418. He also points out that the LXX uses the same verb ἐκτίσειν, “to fill,” as does Matthew 5:6 (see Matthew 1–13, WBC 33A; Accordance electronic ed. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1993), 87, 93). Hagner is here bringing into view an expected exuberant abundance (or surplus) in the Christ-event which history and the scriptures record as God’s redemption of the world from death and sin and for new-creational life in the Spirit of Christ.

10 BDAG, s.v. “περισσεύω,” 804-806.

11 Hagner, in his commentary on this verse, points out that what is in view here is more than a quantitative abundance, but a higher way of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ’s messianic fulfillment. He writes, “The δικαιοσύνη, "righteousness," in view must exceed that of the scribes and Pharisees (πλείον, "more," provides emphasis when added to περισσεύσῃ, "abound") – Matthew 1–13, 109.

12 Matthew 5:47b-48 NET.

13 Mark 10:27 ESV. As far as is possible, I will avoid the use of gender descriptions as it concerns, for instance, references to God (such words as Father, Son, He, and His). However, despite instances that reference God as ‘he’ (to follow the theological idea of ‘Father’ in the history of God’s actions), I acknowledge that all descriptions of God are beyond anthropocentric and androcentric categories. The idea of the Trinity—as Tri-unity—takes us beyond the binary ideas of male and female (see the discussion in Sarah Coakley, “The Trinity and Gender Reconsidered,” in God’s life in Trinity, ed. by Miroslav Volf and Michael Welker (Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Fortress, 2006, 133-142). However, the use of such words as ‘Abba’ intends the theological idea of ‘Father’. This position is not only theological, experiential, or secular in intent but follows in a sense the history of God’s actions in creation as trinitarian. This position may also hint at the Pauline emphasis that in the new-creational realm of the Spirit (having ‘put on Christ’) there is neither male nor female (Galatians 3:28 ESV). We ought to similarly understand words such as Son, Sonship, Personhood of God, and Persons of the Trinity, as theological ideas of God’s ‘unitedness’ and ‘at-one-ness’ expressed inadequately within human linguistic constraints (see the discussion on God as beyond the capacity of ordinary speech by Miroslav Volf in Allah: A Christian Response (New York, NY: Harper One, 2011), 51-56, 139-143). Scripture quotations addressed to man, mankind, him, her, he, she, unless they refer to specific individuals, should be read as addressed to ‘persons,’ or to ‘one who…’, etc. What applies to gender categories through the above Pauline text can equally apply to culture (neither Greek or Jew) and social status (neither slave
John 1:16 announces, “…from his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace.”\(^{14}\) Suggested here using ‘fullness’ (πληρώματος) is the same idea of surplus as the ‘overflowing abundance’ in Matthew’s account of the miracle of the loaves and fishes. Mark 6:43 (“And they took up twelve baskets ‘full’ (πληρωματος) of broken pieces and of the fish”) announces an ‘overflowing’ fullness. It also means even a superabundance that has connections to the fullness of Christ’s blessing stated in Romans 15:29 and to the whole ‘full measure’ (πληρωμα) of Christ’s deity according to Colossians 2:9. The ‘exuberant abundance’ then is in Christ who possesses this ‘full measure’ with the effect as stated in Ephesians 3:19, “…that you might be filled up (πληρωθήτε) to all the fullness (πληρωμα) of God.”\(^{16}\)

The exuberant abundance in Christ also connects to the eschaton—to “the fullness of time”—which according to Galatians 4:4 speaks to the ‘state of being full’ eternally in Christ. We might say, therefore, that the language of superabundant fullness in Christ in Galatians 4:4-6 brings a connection not only between sonship in Christ and human freedom from the law (or from nomism) but also a connection that relates sonship intimately to receiving the Spirit. As Paul writes, “And because you are sons, God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, “Abba, Father.”\(^{17}\) ‘Exuberant abundance’ here overflows into the possibilities contained in the creative energies of deep intimacy with God through the presentation of ‘Father’ in such intimate terms as “Ἀββά ὁ πατήρ.”\(^{18}\)

I also take up with Moltmann’s social trinitarian theology the idea (and experience) of a ‘broad place’ as an energizing and awakening context of ‘true spirituality’ in the work of the Holy Spirit of the resurrection through “…the rebirth of the full and undivided love of life.”\(^{19}\) The idea (and experience) of a ‘broad place’ is mostly implicit in all the following discussions except for chapter five which gives it a greater focus. Moltmann sources his use of ‘broad place’ from the following scriptures: Job 36:16, “He also allured you out of distress into a broad place where there is no more cramping”; Psalm 31:8, “Thou hast set my feet in a ‘broad room’; Psalm 139:5, “Thou surroundest me from every side and holdest thy...
hand over me.”

This ‘broad place’ is thus a place in God’s love that I find in the turn to a love of the life outside of myself—the other who comes to me as Other. The Other comes to awaken me through a ‘new humanity’ in the Spirit to faith for, hope in, and love of and with the other/s, as the three core journeys will seek to take up and explore. I borrow from Ricoeur, here as elsewhere in the study, his use of the first person to emphasize the idea and experience of the “I” letting itself be converted in the turn to Other, and thus ‘into’ the other of a new humanity. It is this conversion that makes known the nature of God’s love as a ‘love of life’.

The use of ‘interanimative dance’ references my search for interactive responses between, with, in, and of, the conversations and concepts engaged. The idea of ‘interanimation’ (i.e., as an ebb and flow of interactive engagement and influence) conjures up a picture of an open and ongoing ‘dance’ of unity-across-diversity rather than a picture of a closed circle. The language of dance takes up Moltmann’s view of open-ended ‘systematic contributions to theology’ and the epistemological humility which resonates with a more dynamic process of dialogical conversation. The word ‘dance’ makes room for a perichoretic tensioned-struggled ‘space’. Also, for an open ‘tensioned’ relationship between correspondences and contradictions; hope and fear; self and other; certainty and doubt, and the known and unknown, as revealed in the death and life of Christ in the Christ-event. It also opens to a discussion of Moltmann’s use of ‘perichoresis’ affirmed by his social trinitarian theology.

My search for responses of peace and justice through the three journeys (seeing-knowing, hoping, doing) aligns with an investigation of the nature of intimacy through a social trinitarian praxis in human and creational life. Moltmann’s social trinitarian theology arises out of his cross-resurrection theology. It references a threefold unity of God in ‘perichoretic community’—a making room for the ‘other’ by the Godhead revealed in the cross-resurrection event. His social trinitarian approach to such ideas as the

20 See Moltmann, Source, 86.
21 The idea of ‘with’ does not imply a presupposed ‘centrism’ at the expense of difference, diversity, other, multiplicity, and plurality. Use of the word ‘with’ is, therefore, never without the meaning ‘of’.
22 The word ‘struggle’ resonates with the liberative aspects of ‘bringing into view’ responses helpful to a process of peace in the world. It has a strong echo in Latin and South African liberation theologies in talk and writings about the struggle of the poor. ‘Struggle’ also references the ‘spiritual struggle’ such as reflected in Ephesians 6:12-20 (i.e., “οτι ουκ εστιν ημιν η παλη προς αιμα και σαρκα, αλλα προς τας άρχας… εν τοις επουρανιοις, “for our battle is not against flesh and blood, but against the principalities … in the heavenly realms”), verse 12, see Andrew T. Lincoln, Ephesians, WBC 42; Accordance electronic ed. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1990), 443). These verses point to 2 Corinthians 2:14-18 where Christ “who is our peace” is the source of the “gospel of peace” referenced in verse 15. ‘The good news’ (του ευαγγελιου) is according to Hall Harris, a ‘genitive of source’ (i.e., ‘the good news that comes from’) – see Harris, Hall W. III, ed. The NET Bible Notes (1st, Accordance electronic. Edited by Richardson. Biblical Studies Press, 2005), n.p). In this sense, Christ is both the source and enabler ‘of peace’ (της ειρηνης). As Lincoln describes it, the paradoxicality here is that it is this ‘peace’ sourced in Christ that enables humanity to take up the struggle, or ‘fight’ of faith, hope and love described in these verses – see Ephesians, 449. See also Together Towards Life: Mission and Evangelism in Changing Landscapes – with a Practical Guide, ed. by Jooseop Keum. WCC Publications (2013), 11-12, which presents the idea of struggle as a ‘lifting up’ through the Holy Spirit who inspires human cultures and creativity. It states, “the testimonies of peoples whose traditions have been scorned and mocked by theologians and scientists, yet whose wisdom offers us the vital and sometimes new orientation that can connect us again with the life of the Spirit in creation, … helps us to consider the ways in which God is revealed in creation” (Ibid, 11). See note 27 for further comment on the idea and experience of ‘struggle’.
other/s, community, trust, a model for Christian life, freedom, tension, doxology, and surplus have theological and philosophical ramifications that are central to the themes of this study.\textsuperscript{23} Moltmann’s trinitarian theology thus prioritizes the dynamic link between these ideas and the presence of the triune God in the cross-resurrection event. In other words, when he speaks of surplus or freedom or tension, this always means the presence of the triune God in the cross-resurrection event as God’s love of the other/s. The triune God’s presence enables and energizes the counterpart human response to the other/s. I hope to show that it is this presence as ‘tensioned surplus’ (or ‘tensioned exuberant abundance’) in the cross-resurrection event that sets up the ‘creative energies’\textsuperscript{24} necessary for a life of peace in the world. However, it will be necessary to explore what we mean by a theology of the presence of the triune God in ‘tensioned exuberant abundance’. This tensioned exuberant abundance is what separates Moltmann’s trinitarian hermeneutics as an analogia relationis from various prior monistic hermeneutics of an analogia entis.\textsuperscript{25}

\begin{itemize}


\item \textsuperscript{25} It seems relevant to note that Moltmann does not reduce the experience of God to any one-sided philosophical preference such as Heraclitus ‘becoming’ over Parmenides ‘being’ or for Hegel’s dynamism (or, idealist dialectic) over Kant’s more ‘static’ objectification of experience and legislation of human reason. Moltmann instead follows the Pauline idea in Romans 8:24-25 that experience (in time) and hope (what is not in time) can be both unique and inseparable. It is God’s revelation through the cross-resurrection event that works in his theology to define both the limits and possibilities of human experience. It is in the Christ-event that he roots his theology of experience, and not in a philosophical preference. He writes, “The question about God and the demonstration of his universal divinity
Moltmann points beyond the analogia entis to an understanding of the sinner’s condition and the close but ‘dissimilar’ God.26 As intended, the references so far to the ‘tensioned turn to the other/s’ arise from the ‘tension’ or crisis in the agony of divine love on the cross.27 My task here is to examine the effect of this ‘tension’ as an open, ongoing deepening process of discerning the developing human creative energy-in-tension for peace and justice in the world.

I explore a process resembling a dynamic open ‘dance’ (rather than a static, or repetitive, closed circle) which moves in interactivity with the other/s in a direction toward understanding peace in the world. These ‘explorations’ are a kind of reexamination of terms and ideas that we may interpret differently to an ‘idealistic’ or a more abstract (or ahistorical) European-Western theoretical framework. These constitute ‘shifts in ideas’ that may open a passage for a quite different effect on how we see-know, hope, and do. A preference for more openly dynamic terms may offer an opportunity for new symbolic expressions useful to aims for peace and justice.28 These may also point us toward specific pertinent public implications of...
theology that speak to issues surrounding the continuing violence in modernity. The reader will have already noted several of these constructive ‘tweaks’ toward more dynamic-open language. The word ‘dialectic’ becomes an open, ongoing deepening process of discerning the ‘tensioned struggle’. The word ‘critique’ becomes more theological as ‘discernment’. The word ‘surplus’ becomes ‘exuberant abundance,’ ‘exuberant-abundant excess’, or the ‘how much more’ of Romans 5:10. The word ‘dialogue’ becomes ‘interanimative dance’ or ‘interanimative exploration’ or ‘ineranimative conversation’. Doctrine becomes ‘theologia viae’ (a ‘theology of the way’ for a people of “the Way” – see Acts 19:8). However, I acknowledge that the rephrasing of terms continues in some sense the problematic of their sources and histories.

1/2—Personal Motivation and Method

My interest in the three core journeys of seeing-knowing, hoping, and doing is a hopeful wager through the disciplines of this study’s dialogical conversations for interanimative responses that may yield a contribution to peace and justice. I am searching for an understanding of the triune God’s ‘tensioned’ exuberant-abundant act of love in and through the cross-resurrection event that gives shape to a ‘tensioned exuberant-abundant’ seeing-knowing, hoping, and doing with, from, and for the other/s. The explorations that follow, therefore, set out to examine the potential responses in each journey’s unique contribution and their unifying potential. These responses may offer a constructive and discerning dialogue understood as an ‘interanimative dance’, which may bring into view a unity-across-diversity of these three journeys for the sake of a world of peace and justice.

My childhood and adulthood of chronic illness which led to several life-threatening experiences; an early occasion of political displacement; a later personal encounter with God, and an experience of God’s

29 I privilege the word ‘discernment,’ over the word ‘critique’. Discernment qualifies critique, and critique qualifies discernment. Discernment signifies something that continues and has momentum. It does not end and in that sense tends to keep itself open to the possibility for discovery of the new, the unknown, and ‘the other/s’. The tensioned relation between possibility and necessity; self-affirmation and self-preservation; freedom and order; hope and fear, and nature and grace all imply the use of discernment. The ability to discern is the privilege of all and not just a few. Theology strongly supports the idea and experience of discernment (see Keum, Together, 11-12). To discern is the calling of all human beings.

30 See section 1/3 for developments of the idea and experience of the ‘how much more’.

31 I draw from Moltmann for the idea of theologia viae. With my focus on a ‘theology on the way’, I am not saying that dogma is unimportant. Though dogmatic formulae act as ‘regulatory fences’ (to use Anthony Bartlett’s term) to protect the gospel of the cross, we do not begin or end with them in the gospel journey. The gospel journey begins and ends in a relationship with the triune God. For Bartlett’s term, see Cross Purposes: The Violent Grammar of Christian Atonement (Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press International, 2001), 258.

32 My focus on the triune God’s actions in the Christ-event does not in any way suggest the reduction of God’s love to God’s actions in that event only. I engage the totus Christus as the triune God’s superabundant love at work in the very act of kenosis starting with the incarnation. This love in Jesus Christ is an already in-acted trinitarian eschatological christology at work through the Spirit in Jesus before the Christ-event. All explorations of God’s love, such as in the examples used from the natural life of Jesus, implicitly take up this understanding of an eschatological trinitarian christology as it also opens through the resurrection into the work of Christ through the new-creational life of the Spirit of Christ. See also chapter two (2/2/2).

33 See note 52 below for comments on the idea and experience of ‘unity-across-diversity’.
healing have guided me toward an irenical-pietist charismatic experiential faith. The three journeys of seeing-knowing, hoping, and doing represent in some way a personal search to understand the “God [who] is love” (1 John 4:16) and how that translates to and can be distinguished from human love.\(^{34}\) By ‘irenical-pietist’ I do not mean, as might be assumed, ‘other-worldly’. After all, Moltmann’s theology is a political theology in unfolding history. Faith, hope, and love awakened in humanity by the Spirit make sense only as a doxological and pneumatological journey of the love of God in humanity and creation. The Pauline literature here looks to inform a love through the Spirit that “bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, and endures all things.”\(^{35}\)

Any theological journey of thoughts, words, and actions cannot then in the same sense exclude both the ‘tensional movement’ of human freedom in the inner depths of being and existence and the ‘tensional movement’ of God’s love in the triune God as shown in the Christ-event. My emphasis, therefore, stays throughout this study on how the ‘presence in exuberant abundance’ of the triune God affects and effects the praxis and process of human and creational life.

The ‘ground’ on which I hope to move is thus the ground of this world which is situated within and not outside the triune God. It is an existential ground rooted in a trinitarian theology of the cross-resurrection. Referencing Nicolas Berdyaev, Moltmann writes, “Human history is essentially the history of freedom. As the history of freedom, it is at the same time the history of God’s passion. The center and pivot of the divine-human history is the cross of the incarnate God on Golgotha.”\(^{36}\) I thus take up an exploration of God’s love in this “center and pivot of the divine-human history” as the ground of God’s extravagant passion expressed in the tensioned agony of love.

My ‘multiplex’ spiritual background also connects with Moltmann’s approach of not seeking conclusions or premature closure. I try to follow a desire for openness with questions I ask of myself, the other/s, and the world in which we live. The following explorations, therefore, do not try to reach a ‘conclusion’ of the themes taken up. For instance, I have let the explorations of each chapter stand ‘as they are’ in a kind of ‘incompleteness’. In some way, this effort hopes to be less about ‘something’ than about ‘entering into…’. It is about taking part with the responses that may appear in and from the following analyses. I do not wish to bracket my one-sidedness but to search out the dynamic of things. My ‘multiplex’ background also explains my trouble with the framing of terms and concepts within a purely ‘European-Germanic’ dialectic idealism. I want to think with Moltmann and at the same time to ‘think

---

\(^{34}\) I follow here Moltmann’s embodied-experiential theology of hope, which takes up the traces of a path of Christian mysticism in contrast to a ‘transcendental mysticism’ – see Spirit, 260-267.

\(^{35}\) 1 Corinthians, 13:7 ESV.

\(^{36}\) Moltmann, Trinity, 46-47. The Russian religious philosopher, Nicholas Berdyaev, stands among several peripheral influencers of Moltmann’s social trinitarian theology, and whose theology of the cross Moltmann argues is “the answer to the theodicy problem” (see Trinity, 42-47; Spirit, 213, and History, 24). His existential metaphysics of history, philosophy of life and freedom, and trinitarian theology are informative for both complementarities and contradictions to Moltmann’s social trinitarian theology. Berdyaev also informs an existential Eastern Orthodox philosophy and theology of communality in conversation with Moltmann’s more Western-European influences. An in-depth comparison between Moltmann’s social trinitarian theology and Berdyaev’s theology-philosophy is beyond the scope of this study. See also section 1/3 below.
tensionally forward’ from Moltmann. Thinking this way may mean on the one hand drawing away from specific aspects of the dialectical thesis-antithesis-synthesis of abstract theory. It may mean, alternatively, exploring and illuminating new elements of human experience and ferreting out the role of experience in the three journeys of seeing-knowing, hoping, and doing.

As I try to move toward more dynamic ‘tensional’ (not excluding the concrete) expressions, I am turning from theory to creative human experience without suspending the tensions between them. I am not saying that Moltmann is shy of human experience or that he is too abstract. Instead, that he very much lives and moves in the general milieu which pivots around a German academic world and is trying to speak from it into a broader world. He appropriately uses words that are acceptable in that world. However, my context and focus differ from his. It leads me to try to tweak his ideas or concepts into something different through creative and constructive insights comparable with my more pietistic-charismatic experience and background.37 I am searching here for a ‘language of transition’ (to use Ricoeur’s term38) that might facilitate a ‘bridge’ through the energies of the Spirit of the resurrection to a world of peace.

For instance, my use of the words ‘an open, ongoing deepening process of discerning the tensioned struggle’ is an attempt to redirect the thesis-antithesis-synthesis of abstract theory and to take that level of theory into a more ‘human’ tensioned struggle for meaning and understanding. However, this journey is still an exploration toward Moltmann’s bodily open cosmic pneumatological-christology of a Christianity as “…a way and a moving forward, in the discovery of ‘the always greater Christ’.”39

My task here is to bring into view how Christ surmounts the dichotomy between self and other, subject and object, and the hostility and violence in the contemporary world. I hope to find responses for peace. These responses may show aspects of seeing and knowing, hoping, and doing as forms of faith and hope in actions of love that are not speculative fantasies, but which are anchored in the bodily resurrection of Christ and thus in our bodies as well.40 These responses may also open up a more existential passage to meaningfulness in lived experience. Though the ideas of ‘tensioned struggle’ and ‘peace’ may seem contradictory, their interanimative relation can have a positive impact on aspects of the world’s need for peace and justice.

The search here is not for a polarization of positive or negative emphases but a tensioned emphasis. I aim to take up this tension both as the dark and the light working in a normalcy of tensional thinking and

37 Moltmann’s theology which always held mystical elements undergoes in his later writings a rapprochement to the acceptance of more epiphanic experiential elements. See Moltmann, Spirit, 198-213. See also Bauckham, The Theology, 213-247.
38 I draw here from Ricoeur’s development of a ‘language of transition’ to explore the space between present philosophical and theological ideas, positions, and experiences in the public space, and my explorative journey with these positions, ideas, and experiences – see Soi-Même Comme un Autre (Paris, FR: Éditions du Seuil, 1990), 30-32. Drawing on the ‘speculative eruption’ of the Bible’s language, such as in Exodus 3:14, Ricoeur develops a dual—two systems of language—that opens to a ‘language of transition’ between religion and philosophy – see the discussions in Critique and Conviction: Conversations with François Azouvi and Marc de Launay, trans. by Kathleen Blamey (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 1998), 149-150.
39 Moltmann, Way, 275, and 213-341.
40 See Moltmann, Way, 252-263.
acting as seen in the exuberant-abundant act of the triune God in and through the cross and resurrection. We might see here the theme of an exuberant abundance of life over death in the triune God’s embrace of the tensioned struggle. I am also searching for responses for peace through the idea that from within the tensioned struggle we might see and take up an inseparable cooperative relation between hope and fear, wonder and wisdom, self and other, and known and unknown. Might we see in this tensioned struggle a ‘harmony of contrasts’ (to use Rudolf Otto’s term41) in exuberant-abundant hope as a proper response to the paradoxes in the dualities of human existence?

My concerns for a world of peace grew initially through our family’s political displacement from the Island of Mauritius in the 1960s, which was occasioned by threats on my father’s life for his reconciliatory efforts in more local aspects of its political turmoil.42 As a Francophone outsider, I personally experienced the consequences of Apartheid in our cross-cultural and church planting work in South Africa in the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s. South African political and social violence was founded on an abuse of power exacerbated, among other things, by the destructive and dehumanizing effects of unbridled capitalism.43 From 1998 onwards we were sent as a family to work as church planters in Canada and several other countries as part of an apostolic team functioning internationally. In these countries, we also continued to experience a concern for peace for the various ecological, theological, political, and social aspects of Western modernity.

This study is thus for me not less than political; however, neither is it only political. Violence continues today in the cultural ghettos of the world’s most modern cities; in the increasing economic disparities between rich and poor; in the objectification of people and cultures. It continues in religious terrorism; in possessive individualism; in democratically sanctioned violence; in nuclear-deterrence, and the wanton possession of the natural world, to name a few.

The search from the midst of these crises is thus for an integrated move in each core journey (seeing-knowing, hoping, doing) toward a tensioned, ongoing unity-across-diversity that explores meaning in the trinitarian history of God.44

I am here imagining an ‘imaginary’ (to use Charles Taylor’s term45) and am trying to grasp the love of God in the horror of the cross and the wonder of the resurrection. I take up explorations of that event


42 Our family left the Island of Mauritius in the aftermath of the death of a close friend at the hands of a political mob.

43 I reference here the discussions between Padraig O’Malley and Gérard de Fleuriot on this subject in the O’Malley Political Interviews of July 1985; an investigative process funded by the Nelson Mandela Centre of Memory – https://www.nelsonmandela.org/omalley/index.php/site/q/03lv00017/04lv00344/05lv00345/06lv00346.htm

44 I explore with Moltmann, an eschatological-theological ‘undecidability’ of three journeys that keep a tensioned, ongoing open ‘unity-across-diversity’ (see note 52 below; also, chapter two [2/1/3]). In other words, each journey stays at the same time inconclusive and open, and yet is also inseparable from the other two. They thus function in a kind of interanimative dance. Moltmann’s social trinitarian theology takes up this ‘undecidability’ as what awaits fulfillment in Christ at the eschaton.

through Moltmann’s imaginative-creative ‘salvation-historical’ starting point.\(^{46}\) It begins, therefore, with Moltmann, “…not only from the history of Christ but also from the history of the Spirit which is bound up with the history of Christ.”\(^{47}\) The implicit and explicit understanding of ‘salvation’ operative in Moltmann is a dynamic whereby we are “…taken up by the trinitarian history into the eternal life of the Trinity.”\(^{48}\)

This starting point in the doctrine of the Trinity takes up an understanding of God that follows salvation history. Moltmann understands the triune God’s unity, for instance, in trinitarian terms and not modalistically. Moreover, he recognizes the unity of the Father, Son, and Spirit as an “open, inviting, reuniting, integrating unity.”\(^{49}\)

The ‘creative’ aspect of this approach is really a ‘creativity in imagination’. This creativity is an imagined reality which I explore here 1) from the tensioned actual and symbolic event of the cross and resurrection and 2) from what I have experienced through the Spirit in present existential and physical reality. I understand the theme of hope and awe in the resurrection as the tensioned exuberant-abundant overflow of the wonder and wisdom of God. Here, wonder works through God’s hope in the world and wisdom works through the awe of the reverence (or ‘fear’) of God.\(^{50}\)

In a sense, what I propose here is a theological open-narrative for grasping reality that recognizes its ‘one-sided’ frame with and alongside the other/s. I accept the classic postmodern critique of the ‘coerciveness’ of all metanarratives. What I see is that nobody can know anything in a final way. We, as the corporate developing global community, can evolve, can learn, and adjust, and take up in new journeys ideas and examples of the ‘other/s’ that incorporate what we learn with what we have received. We allow the would-be excluded other to “be”. Center and margin/alization may be unavoidable, but our call is to vigilance and respect of the other/s. By analogy, no close relationship is possible in our world without upsetting the other person at some point. However, at no point should we set out to upset those others. We must remain sensitive and prepared to apologize and learn. I do not intend to fixate on or aim for totality rather than to respect and be open to infinity. I also do not intend to absolutize this study’s open-narrative as a would-be metanarrative, but to allow myself to come down and take a stand, while still being vigilant and attentive to my (unintended) exclusions.

I take up ideas rooted in the actual (or ‘concrete’) and symbolic event of the cross and resurrection that the Christian tradition reveals as the history of the triune God’s actions of love for humanity and creation. I base the following explorations in this Christian tradition which takes up this event as one said not to exist in any other tradition. The Muslim and Jewish people and those in different cultural and religious

\(^{46}\) See discussions in Moltmann, *History*, 80-89.

\(^{47}\) Moltmann, *History*, 83.

\(^{48}\) Moltmann, *History*, 83.

\(^{49}\) Moltmann, *History*, 86.

\(^{50}\) I take up here aspects of Moltmann’s creative-imaginative salvation-historical approach to the Christ-event. See also chapter two (2/1/3).
worlds do not see the world in this way, but they do see the world in a way; non-Christian modern and postmodern academics do not see the world in this way, but they do see the world in a way.

The Christian tradition is the filter through which I understand the world and through which I propose this study’s explorations. The search here through the Christ-event is for responses of peace and justice in a violent world with those who are interested in seeing the world in this way. What I write here is one-sided and incomplete, based only on what I see or know, but I have no control over how or whether others may or may not grasp or embrace it. I do not intend any coercion through the following explorations.

This study takes up as its ‘overall themes’ (or ‘tasks’) a theology of evangelism, a public theology, and a personally experienced theology. First, evangelism means the sanctifying work of the Spirit in the ‘gospel of peace’ through faith in Jesus Christ for hope, peace, and justice in the world. Second, publicly engaged means the task empowered by God’s love of developing and expressing a heart of ‘open friendship’ toward the other/s in the world who are at the margins for the liberation of humanity and creation. Third, personally experienced means the work of the Spirit through a ‘language of the Spirit’ of fruit and gifts in the creative energies of the Holy Spirit. These three factors also hold intersecting elements. In summary, the search here is for a biblical and coherent way of engaging in and journeying with the creative energies of the love of God in the world. I will return in the concluding chapter to these three ‘overall’ ‘intersecting’ themes or tasks, which, though not directly discussed, will remain the implicit underbelly of all the following explorations.\(^5\)

I aim to dis-cover, through ‘creative energy in tension’ in the three core journeys (in both their uniqueness and interconnectedness), essential responses to the questions and concerns discussed. The cross-resurrection event is in this regard formative for this study as it speaks to a turn to the other/s in all the three core journeys of seeing-knowing, hoping, and doing. This event may inform an analogous or creative response to God’s love in the idea and experience of a tensioned way of seeing-knowing through hope and for a ‘doing’ of God’s love with or for the other/s.

We might also describe the tensioned struggle in these three core journeys as a ‘conversion’—a metanoia through Jesus’s invitation to turn to a journey with him, for, towards, and within the kingdom of God. This ‘conversion’ comes through the ‘how much more’ of grace in the resurrection life of the Spirit for sanctification, and thus for the developing of a discernment of faith by hope in the two directions of love (the love of God as Other, and the love of neighbor as the other/s). I also explore, among other things, the following questions: Might the idea (and experience) of otherness be primarily an experience of the others’ nearness rather than their distance? Is it then the already experienced and thus known nearness that makes the experience of difference possible? Such nearness in the tension of difference, if we find this to be so, may lend support to the idea of an open, ongoing deepening process of discerning the tensioned struggle in contemporary thinking and action as a turn to the other/s.

\(^5\) See chapter five (5/3/1-5/3/3).
I am searching here for aspects of an everyday way of life lived for the other/s through the experience of the how much more of God’s unfathomable love made known in the tensioned struggle of the cross-resurrection event. My aim, therefore, is to develop discernment through the idea and experience of uncovering this how much more revealed in the Christ-event.

My wager is for an exuberant abundance in the tensioned turn to the other/s in unity-across-diversity that may bring into view human responses beneficial to peace in the unity between our seeing-knowing, hoping, and doing!\(^{52}\)

However, before continuing to an introduction of the secondary conversation partners, some further developments of the idea and experience of exuberant abundance as a how much more needs setting out.

1/3—Further Development of the ‘How Much More’

I draw from Moltmann’s theology of the overflow of hope for my use of a ‘how much more’ of God’s life over death in the cross-resurrection event.\(^53\) This event in this sense uncovers a tensioned exuberant abundance in social trinitarian theology. The cross and resurrection event is the decisive point around which the following explorations unfold. Though, as already proposed, the tensional relation in the cross and resurrection, as both contradiction and correspondence, means that we cannot either separate or

---

\(^{52}\) My use of ‘unity’ assumes a unity-across-difference or unity-across-diversity that does not subsume either element of ‘unity’ or ‘uniqueness.’ The idea of ‘unity-across-diversity’ follows Moltmann’s proposal for a ‘unity’ in the three core journeys (see Way, 236-237). I obtain the idea of unity-across-difference from Charles Taylor whose philosophy also lends support to some of the following themes of this study. See “A Catholic Modernity?”, in A Catholic Modernity? Charles Taylor’s Marianist Award Lecture, ed. James L. Heft (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, Inc., 1999), 13-38. This move of ‘unity-across-diversity’ (or, interconnectedness-across-diversity) is also a creative move toward an imagination, or of imagining a ‘social imaginary’ (to use Taylor’s term).

\(^{53}\) The words “how much more” are from Romans 5:10 NET. Both Ricoeur (Conflict, 311f) and Moltmann (Way, 242f) specifically take up these words. Moltmann describes them as a ‘way’ or passage to the ‘always greater Christ’. The idea of ‘exuberant-abundant excess’—the how much more—in the Christ-event offers an alternative ‘conversion’. The how much more here includes a conversion to humility in the Spirit so that in communion with all creation we might celebrate the work of the triune God (see Keum, Together, 10). The aspect of conversion to humility also forms an integral aspect of the explorations of this study. Moltmann juxtaposes the ‘how much more’ of ‘the always greater Christ’ to the polarizing frameworks of anthropocentrism and cosmo-centrism. He also juxtaposes ‘the always greater Christ’ to the Pietist idea of a ‘personal religion’ or to a Western ‘religion of history’ – see Way, 275. The intent here is thus to search out a future that stays open to the symbol of hope and the exuberant abundance of promise over fulfillment. My concern is not to look for a ‘totality of unity’ but to try to understand the effect of the exuberant abundance of Christ’s resurrection life in the creative energies of human existence. I think of this exuberant abundance as a natural sense of the plants which if treated with respect and tended with care may better supply an excess of seed that can be re-sown by wind or human hands. This exuberant abundance also speaks of the earth which may supply the fruit that enables human and creatational existence to continue. Respect for the earth is gratitude that may have the effect of changing for instance what we eat or how we replenish what we need and take. The 2013 WCC report on mission and evangelism states, “We want to affirm our spiritual connection with creation, yet the reality is that the earth is being polluted and exploited. Consumerism triggers not limitless growth but endless exploitation of the earth’s resources. Human greed is contributing to global warming and other forms of climate change. If this trend continues and earth is fatally damaged, what can we imagine salvation to be? Humanity cannot be saved alone while the rest of the created world perishes. Eco-justice cannot be separated from salvation, and salvation cannot come without a new humility that respects the needs of all life on earth” (Keum, Together, 10-11). However, an exploration on ecological-eschatological ethics is beyond the scope of this study.
subsume them one for the other. Also, how we experience God, as Moltmann shows, comes through the contradiction that the cross of Christ presents to our reality in history.54

Moltmann develops the idea and experience of exuberant abundance from the presence (and overflow) of God’s resurrection life that works from the ground of Christ’s death on the cross. Moltmann’s eschatology of hope is thus unapologetically Christocentric. It also shifts emphasis away from the apocalyptic idea of final solutions and leans toward “…the new creation of all things… In God’s creative future, the end will become the beginning, and the true creation is still to come and is ahead of us.”55

Moltmann develops the idea and experience of exuberant abundance as a theological theme that describes the nature of God’s presence in history. He shows out of this presence an awakened hope that makes humanity alive to the possibilities of and for history. Through the inspiration of a genuine religion of redemption in Dietrich Bonhoeffer and Christoph Blumhardt, Moltmann shows how Christ’s resurrection excess of divine life over death is a ‘yes to God’s earth’; sets God against death and sets the ‘Christian hope of resurrection’ against idolatrous ‘mythological hope’ (that which hopes for a heaven ‘on the other side’).56 However, this ‘resurrection excess’ does not remove the idea and experience of anxiety and suffering from the passion of God’s love. Chapter two (2/2) will take up an exploration on anxiety and suffering, and where following Bonhoeffer, Moltmann argues that ‘only a suffering God can help.’

Moltmann frames his hermeneutical and epistemological themes within God’s self-movement in history as a surplus of promise over both Testaments (Old and New) toward the ultimate fulfillment of God’s purposes. His use of the already mentioned idea of ‘surplus’ also references Isaac Luria’s Kabbalistic zimsum, which shows God’s creative act of ‘letting his creation be’ by making room for his creation through withdrawing himself in self-limitation.57 For Moltmann, this surplus of hope is not a euphoric or triumphalistic state but surfaces through the struggle in the cross-resurrection event. Moltmann also sees this surplus via the Old Testament's openness to the “surplus of promise.”58

With Moltmann, the instance of the death and life of Christ in the single cross and resurrection event (of ‘double dimension’) informs the relation between God’s love and the freedom within which God’s love works. As he puts it,

If God is love, then his liberty [freedom] cannot consist of loving or of not loving. On the contrary, his love is his liberty and his liberty is his love. He is not compelled to love by any outward or inward

54 See Moltmann, Hope, 16-17; Crucified, 28.
55 See Jürgen Moltmann, The Coming of God: Christian Eschatology, trans. by Margaret Kohl (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1996), xi. I follow the “flow” of the developing structure of Moltmann’s theological contributions: 1) his social trinitarian theology, and 2) his eschatological theology of God’s indwelling “…in his people, in his Christ, and in our hearts through his life-giving Spirit” – see Ibid, xii. Thus, without excluding the theological aspects of ‘world in God,’ I prioritize and develop the theological aspects of ‘God in world’. This double emphasis means that I keep my focus on Moltmann’s Christocentric eschatology rather than on an anthropocentric or monotheistic teleology.
56 Jürgen Moltmann, Sun of Righteousness, ARISE! God’s Future for Humanity and the Earth, trans. by Margaret Kohl (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2010), 77-82, 140.
57 See Moltmann, Crucified, 87-88.
58 See Moltmann, Experiences in, 126.
necessity. Love is self-evident for God. So, we have to say that the triune God loves the world with the very same love that he himself is.\(^{59}\)

God’s love, in this sense, does not determine freedom, though it creates it.\(^{60}\) In other words, it is not necessary for God to love (or to en-act love) because God is love. To love is not separate from God. We cannot abstract love from who God is. I am searching here for divine love in explorations about God in contrast with various theodicies that advocate a masochistic God.\(^{61}\) The essential truth that God is love shifts the question from such theodicies to the questions of anthropodicy. Theodicies try to justify a God of unlimited power and goodness, given the reality of evil. However, this process can legitimate evil. I am here trying instead to shift the discussion from ‘how can a good God allow or not intervene to counter evil?’ to: ‘how can human beings allow or not intervene to counter evil?’\(^{62}\)

If “God is love” as written down in 1 John 4:16 then freedom comes with and because of God’s loving acts. Moltmann supports a ‘creative tension’ in his repudiation of the Greek dualisms of time and eternity and the abstraction of soul and body from the experience of natural life.\(^{63}\) He applies this ‘tension’ through his theology of the cross-resurrection in the new-creational life in a holistic pneumatology. He argues for an eschatological duality of past and future whereby God, through the Spirit, redeems all of reality.\(^{64}\)

Thus, the cross of Christ gives a theology of exuberant abundance its meaning concerning its forward-looking hope in eschatological tenor, and in its remembrance of Old Testament promises. This theology of exuberant-abundant life over death references the tension between correspondence and contradiction in the cross-resurrection event. It also references an excess of promise over and above reality and fulfillment. It opens responses to the future hope “that God may be all in all” (1 Corinthians 15:28 ESV). Moltmann defends the stress he places on this tension between promise and reality through the real and symbolic

---

\(^{59}\) Moltmann, *Trinity*, 151 (his emphasis).

\(^{60}\) Moltmann also takes up this discussion of the ‘relation between love and freedom’ in his references to Berdyaev in *Trinity*, 42-43. Berdyaev argues uniquely for the original ‘tensioned’ dual elements of the created human—as having sprung from both God’s nature and out of ‘non-being’ ‘nothing’ or ‘uncreated freedom’. He articulates here for the idea that through having both God’s nature and ‘uncreated freedom’, the human cannot rebel from God but is ‘free to resist’ God and choose to return to the ‘non-being’ that is prior to being—the “meonic abyss which is neither Creator nor creature and is not a reality co-existent with the reality of God” – see *The Destiny of Man*, trans. by Natalie Duddington (New York, NY: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1960), 54, also 17-26.


\(^{62}\) I seek a solution to the general problems created by various theodicies by exploring with Moltmann the figure of the suffering Christ whose suffering justifies humanity and not God. I thus undertake a search for a creative response that moves away from God’s ‘plausibility and legitimation’ toward an exploration of the question about creativeness from ‘below’ as it were. In this sense following Moltmann and Berdyaev, I investigate the idea (not exclusively) of “…God [who] awaits from man an anthropological revelation of creativity…” (Berdyaev, *The Meaning of the Creative Act*, trans. by Donald A. Lowrie (New York, NY: Collier Books, 1962), 92). I shift my focus here from a justification of God (theodicy), to a justification of humans (anthropodicy) as created and co-creators (on the journey with creation; with the Spirit; and in communion with the other(s)), and in celebrating the work of the triune God in the world. I follow Moltmann and Berdyaev, in the search for an understanding of the creative human response in new birth through the Spirit that brings into view a response of peace and justice.

\(^{63}\) See Richard Bauckham’s discussion of Moltmann’s use of a ‘creative tension’ in *The Theology*, 222-232.

\(^{64}\) See Moltmann, *Spirit*, 83-98.
cross of Christ (the death and resurrection of the ‘bearer of the promise’).\textsuperscript{65} Christ’s presence ‘in Word and Spirit’ is the bridge between ‘faith in the promise’ and ‘the Coming of God’. He sees ‘exuberant abundance’ thus eschatologically rather than teleologically. In other words, he sees it expressed through the new-creational life as “the beginning is in the end.”\textsuperscript{66} Moltmann and Ricoeur oppose the Hegelian premature closure to a telos-end (a concluded [or resolved] dialectic). Moltmann also implies here that it is a too limited if not dangerous and futile view of human existence to aim for the fulfilling of human striving and planning.

Moltmann’s prioritizing of the ‘exuberant abundance in the promise’ aligns thus with Paul Ricoeur’s logic of surplus as the grace of an undeserved overflow. Ricoeur sees this ‘logic of undeserved overflow’ in the “much more… where sin increased, grace abounded all the more” (Romans 5:17-20 ESV). The cross-resurrection event makes real this ‘logic’ in history. The possibility of an exuberant abundance in the cross-resurrection event offers to our investigation a potential opening of passage to the other/s that may foster aspects of a publicly engaged symbolic discourse, or language, for peace.\textsuperscript{67}

I am not going to be writing about peace per se but about what, through a larger tensional ‘interanimative exploration’ of thought, feeling, and action, may elicit responses of peace that bring into view a greater openness, or a more open pathway to the other/s.\textsuperscript{68} The three core journeys in their ongoing unforeclosed tensioned turn to the other/s do suggest the strong possibility of obtaining enough responses rich enough to inform the questions and concerns set out in this study. This turn to the other/s, inspired by the creative tension of the cross and resurrection, combines suffering-with and hope. Following this introduction, the three core journeys (expressed through the three broad core questions or statements) are set out in three chapters (\textit{chapters two to four}). Chapter five then concludes this study’s journeys.


\textsuperscript{66} See Moltmann, \textit{Experiences in}, xvi; also, 87-112.\textsuperscript{67} For the idea of a publicly oriented ‘symbolic discourse or language,’ I draw on Paul Ricoeur, \textit{Figuring the Sacred: Religion, Narrative, and Imagination}, trans. by David Pellauer, ed. by Mark I. Wallace (Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Fortress Press, 1995).

\textsuperscript{68} According to the ‘overall themes or tasks’ (evangelism, public theology, and personally experienced theology – see section 1/2 above), I aim to search for responses via an exploration of the tensioned exuberant abundance in the Christ-event. These responses may inform (via a personally experienced witness and in a public witness) a world of peace and justice through a tensioned unity-across-diversity in the new-creational life of the Spirit of the resurrection. Space does not allow for an in-depth exploration of ecclesiology in an increasingly pluralized contemporary world, such as the ‘metamodern’ psychography. For the elements of metamodernism, see Robin Van den Akker, Alison Gibbons and Timotheus Vermeulen, eds., \textit{Metamodernism: Historicity, Affect, and Depth After Postmodernism} (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield International, 2017).
This thesis is an endeavor to think with Moltmann. I would, therefore, like to test, develop discernment of, and discover with Moltmann and to take up the thoughts and words of various important authors. My approach or response will not be to write a thesis on Moltmann (or on any of these authors). I hope instead to take the central concept of Moltmann’s social-trinitarian theology of ‘surplus’ (as seen in his cross-resurrection theology) into the journeys described for the sake of bringing into view responses helpful to peace and justice in the world. I will only engage these authors’ writings in as much as they are relevant to the conversation with Moltmann.

1/4—Secondary Conversation Partners

Paul Ricoeur and Miroslav Volf are two voices among others that explore dimensions of the status quaestionis of this thesis. Ricoeur takes up the tension of self-other in his analysis of explanation (method) and understanding (truth). The turn to the other/s in Moltmann’s writings and Ricoeur’s is well documented and analyzed in the secondary literature. Ricoeur displaces the pretensions of the subject and its immediacy with an uncompletable dialectic. I take ‘dialectic’ to mean here an open, ongoing deepening process of discerning the tensioned struggle. Ricoeur moves toward a possibility of the wisdom of hope through the ‘surplus’ in eschatological hope. His hermeneutical philosophy subsumes neither method nor truth. It effects a coming into view of the passion of the ‘much more’ of Romans 5:10 through an open, ongoing deepening process of discerning the tensioned struggle between method and truth.

Ricoeur thus makes a move significant for our purposes toward the ‘drama of embrace’ for victims and perpetrators as it appears in Volf’s social trinitarian theology. He opens the hermeneutical problem to the perspective of psychology and the sociology of knowledge by engaging hope through a move from self to another in language and critical discernment. He makes a passage to an ontology of understanding in life, of both limits and possibilities. Through the analysis of the distance and presence in the self-other

70 Moltmann (and the other conversation partners in this study’s interanimative explorations) all seem not to subscribe to the idea of a substantive ‘givenness’ that forms human access to the sacred. The focus turns here from the human constitution to human relation. Moltmann draws on the theological idea from Psalm 8:5 that ‘the human being is the other who resembles God’ (see God in, 3-4, 77). Ricoeur’s hermeneutical philosophy expresses the same opposition to self-foundational claims for the human identity. He directs the idea of ‘good life’ or of ‘the narrative unity of life’ via Martha Nussbaum to its ‘fragility’ in the ‘tension’ of living between the fulfilled and unfulfilled. He writes, “What is to be thought here, is of a higher finality which would not cease to be internal to human action” [“Ce qui est ici à penser, c’est l’idée d’une finalité supérieure qui ne cesserait pas d’être intérieure à l’agir humain” – see Soi-Même, 210]. Relevant to this study is the coming into view through the Christ-event of an ongoing hermeneutical circle of back and forth that shows the uncompletable tension between interpretation and action or between ‘our aims of a “good life” and our “choices’. Ricoeur shows this ongoing tension of ‘possibilities and limits’ in the creative energies that the cross-resurrection event reveals to humanity. William Lane in his commentary on Hebrews 12:2 describes this tension of love in Jesus’s death as, “ephemeral joy that Christ rejected with his free decision to submit to the cross” – see Hebrews 9–13, WBC 47B; Accordance electronic ed. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1991), 414.
relation he calls for integration into a larger tensioned struggle in thought, feeling, and action for the sake of a ‘freedom in the light of hope’.\textsuperscript{71}

Miroslav Volf takes up a social trinitarian analysis of the cross-resurrection event. He engages an analysis of victims and perpetrators in contemporary society through a critical discernment of the boundaries of identity and reconciliation. I take up a \textit{not uncritical} exploration of Volf’s analysis of the eschatology and praxis of reconciliation. Volf critiques the violence-producing polarization that exists between certain liberation theologies and oppression in the world. Volf’s thought is of interest to my project because he also engages the tensional struggle between exclusion and embrace. He takes up a move that opposes the negation of otherness through a Moltmann-influenced exploration of the surplus of grace.\textsuperscript{72}

I also draw occasional support from the writings of several thinkers who have influenced Moltmann’s christology and his doctrine of the Trinity, such as Nicolas Berdyaev,\textsuperscript{73} and to a limited extent, Christoph F. Blumhardt.\textsuperscript{74} These each in their various ways emphasize a ‘lived’ gospel open to the cross of Christ and a gospel of new-creational life in the energies of the \textit{Holy Spirit of the resurrection} birthed out of the boundless love of God for humanity. Berdyaev’s Eastern Orthodox philosophical-theological influence and background keeps open our desire to access the social-existential trinitarian elements understood as, among others, having initially inspired Moltmann to incorporate the Eastern Orthodox aspects of social trinitarian theology. These writers also each continue a witness to a dynamic prophetic and ‘tensioned’ faith life rooted in the resurrection of Christ that may speak to our concerns for peace in a world of violence. I also draw on the psychology of children’s cognition of Shellie H. Levine in \textit{chapter three} (3/1, 3/3) through an interanimative exploration with Moltmann and Ricoeur. I focus on her phenomenology of spirituality for how it may inform aspects of Moltmann’s opposition to Aristotelian logic.\textsuperscript{75}

\textsuperscript{71} Ricoeur, \textit{Conflict}, 402.


\textsuperscript{73} In addition to several references to Nicolas Berdyaev in this chapter, I draw on his social trinitarian ideas, see \textit{chapter two} (2/2/2-2/2/4); \textit{chapter three} (3/3); \textit{chapter five} (5/3). Moltmann references the following books by Berdyaev: \textit{Spirit and Reality}, trans. by George Reavey (London, UK: Geoffrey Bles: The Centenary Press, 1939); \textit{The Meaning of History}, trans. by George Reavey (New York, NY: The World Publishing Company, 1962). See section 1/3 above.


The authors mentioned above each engage through their taking up of the tensional struggle between self and other a unique approach to the cross-resurrection event for the formulation of life lived wisely. They each present material for our explorations of the ‘how’ of life lived with sense or wisdom and not nonsense, and of a life lived through an informed faith, hope, and love in 1) what we see-know already; 2) a hope in the not yet, and 3) a doing in the now. They each suggest the possibility for retrieval of hope in the experience of the said ‘tensioned struggle’ between possibilities and limits. They each inform my aim with Moltmann for unity between the three journeys as an unhindered open tensional discourse in history and eschatology.

My mentions of the ‘cross-resurrection event’ always refer to Moltmann’s understanding of it unless said otherwise.

1/5—Research Method

According to two gospels, Jesus summarizes the law and the prophets as the two directions of love: the love of God, and the love of neighbor. This view of love is my hermeneutical lens and how I understand the fundamental posture and task of reading the scriptural traditions. Although I do not engage the love of God and neighbor as my theme, this does shape my approach to the reading of texts in what follows. I also engage European and North American thought as a Francophone-Mauritian who, though coming from outside in identity and culture, now lives in North America. I wish the reader to understand the influence of my biography on my desire for aspects of openness to diversity and flexibility and my search for points of contact in intertextuality, intersectionality, and intercontextuality. English is not my first language. I accept, and therefore, do not try to hide from myself, or the reader, my relativity. Following Moltmann, I adopt a ‘communicative’ style of suggestion that gratefully acknowledges the help I have received from the writings and counsels of others and which continue to contribute to my development. I wish thus to follow Moltmann’s approach to his theological writings as follows,

I have never pursued theology as a defense of old doctrines or church dogmas, but always as a journey of discovery in new theological ground. For that reason, my style of thinking is experimental and a way into the adventure of theological ideas. These thoughts, which I write down, are for that reason often tentative and—as some say—reckless and risky. They are intended to stimulate the reader’s own theological thinking. Theology is a common task of the communio sanctorum. In this community, no one person must say everything, but each can make suggestions. In truth, Christian theology is a continuing and enduring conversation about God and the world.

---

76 The later explorations will take up Ricoeur’s ‘metaphoric’ understanding of the resurrection – see Critique, 149-154. Levine’s research also implies a ‘metaphoric’ understanding of the Christ-event – see “Children’s,” 134-137; 77 See Matthew 22:34-40; Mark 12:28-33.
78 My unintentionally varied ecclesial context gives shape to a desire for a multiplex spirituality of unity-across-diversity as a context for an open, ongoing deepening process of discerning the tensioned exuberant abundance of the resurrection. I see this ‘tensioned exuberant abundance’ working in the unity-across-difference of the three core journeys of seeing-knowing, hoping, and doing.
I delimit this study’s commentary on Moltmann’s core citation to his cross-resurrection theology of ‘surplus’ (which I take up as a ‘tensioned exuberant abundance’). I also delimit Ricoeur’s philosophy to his logic of surplus. I engage Miroslav Volf and others in conversation with Moltmann and Ricoeur for how they might inform responses to this study’s aim or goal. In these dialogical engagements, I wish to emphasize finding interanimative responses rather than obtaining answers. In this sense, I do not seek a conclusion. I am looking for a ‘continuation in exuberant abundance’ in the human potentiality for an open, ongoing deepening process of discerning the tensioned struggle between limits and possibility. ‘Discernment’ here may rise through an openness to the other/s. I do not intend to foreclose any procured responses from the benefit of later contributions to this effort. I am searching, through ongoing interanimative explorations, for specific aspects of a publicly engaged symbolic language open to the shortfalls of human life and at the same time to the signals of its transcendence. What may arise through this search is both a public theology and a public witness.

I wish to open interanimative explorations that will contribute to a praxis helpful to communities seeking peace. The order in which I engage the three questions or statements does not imply the subsuming of the unique characteristics of the three core journeys or a sanction of their separation from one another.

The following interanimative conversations with several writings are in conjunction with an inner conversation that attends to questions in myself. I wish to engage a constructive method that works within relationships and conversations to discursively develop discernment. I am searching for an interanimative discourse that is not antagonistic to a contiguous and fluid contemporary context, or its creative expressions worked out in open interanimation.\(^{80}\) I wish to journey toward discernment and to explore the tensioned exuberant-abundant excess in a social trinitarian theology in multiple contexts, expressions, and texts. I privilege irenical over apologetic and polemical interanimative explorations, and universal theocentric openness over dogmatic certainty. Thus, these interanimative explorations hope to develop a more profound and broader discernment so that we may see more than we currently see; hope for more than we now hope or plan for; and in the light of the more, so that we can then do more than we are doing. The selected disciplines that form part of these interanimative explorations engage thus in conversations for ‘bringing into view’ the various aspects of this study’s thesis statement.

1/6—Structure of Chapters

Each of the three questions (on seeing and knowing, hoping, doing) describes one ‘leg’ of a three-fold process. I intend to figure out the nature of the unity, or ‘interconnectedness’ in purpose, of the three core journeys in their respective turns to the other/s.

---

\(^{80}\) The emergence of a general hermeneutics helps this interanimation, although as Ricoeur shows, finding a unity of human speech is problematic (Ricoeur, *Conflict*, 15-16.). It may be that Wentzel Van Huyssteen’s post-foundationalist approach could be helpful in applying and developing this open dialogical interanimative method. However, such an exploration is outside the purview of this study.
Chapter two (Seeing and Knowing) focuses on the question: how can we see and know the other/s? The explorations of this chapter take up seeing and knowing as unique experiences in a sense, but which I delimit here to the analysis of what we already know or see. This delimitation does not abstract seeing and knowing from hoping, and doing. According to Moltmann’s social trinitarian theology, ‘knowing’ takes its cue from the exuberant abundance of hope and loving action through the triune God in the resurrection of Christ.81 The very idea of an exuberant abundance shows, for instance, the primacy of hoping over seeing and knowing and yet also of their inseparability. In line with Moltmann’s eschatologically oriented and expanded knowing, I treat hoping and doing as separate explorations in the next chapters. However, also, this does not prevent the aspects of hoping and doing contributing to this chapter’s investigation of the seeing and knowing journey to the other/s. My use of the double term seeing and knowing intends to ease a process of developing discernment (or, of uncovering of understanding [truth] and interpretation [method] in the act and work of thought, conscience, perception, and belief—immanent and transcendent).82 I accept that seeing and knowing are not synonymous, since we can ‘know’ something without being able to ‘see’ it, and vice versa. I do not delimit ‘seeing’ to what we physically see, but it includes seeing ‘in the mind’s eye’ as it were. However, by naming and joining seeing and knowing I give myself the creative scope, first, to emphasize a broader aspect of originary understanding concerning how we might develop discernment in our seeing and knowing of the other/s. Second, to make room theoretically for the ‘tensioned’ seeing and knowing of both certainty and doubt; truth and grace; charisma and routine; known and unknown, and self and the other/s.

I introduce here also an analysis of the idea and experience of a ‘suspension of dichotomy’ in Moltmann’s social trinitarian theology of the cross that we will continue to explore in the explorations on hoping and on doing. This analysis of a ‘suspension of dichotomy’ through Moltmann’s social trinitarian theology of the cross is a search for and knowing the other/s in the situation between imprisonment and hope; in the human-divine relation, and in the self-other relation. I ask: what did God do in and through the cross that has so confronted all humanity and history? I also ask the reader here to consider the aspect of a tensioned struggle through Christ’s ‘word of the cross’ as an ongoing approach to seeing and knowing the other/s in the contemporary world.

Chapter three (Hoping) discusses the question: how may we hope in and with the other/s? I engage here an interanimative exploration of Shellie H. Levine’s psychology of children’s cognition; Paul Ricoeur’s hermeneutical philosophy, and Moltmann’s social trinitarian theology of hope in and with the other/s. I explore here Moltmann’s social trinitarian theology of exuberant-abundant hope in the other/s as both a resource and challenge to the Aristotelian Principle of Likeness. I also explore the connection between the childlike humility and courage seen in the gospel story and the cross and the emergence of

---

81 Moltmann, Science, 6.
82 The language of “seeing” poses considerable problems for people who are physically blind. Sensitivity to our language concerning those living with various disabilities thus becomes an issue of ‘openness to the other’. The ideas ‘see and know’ in this study do not intend an ‘objectifying’ of ‘the other/s’.
hope in the resurrection. These interanimative explorations continue the search for a suspension of dichotomy through the tensioned exuberant abundance of hope in and with the other/s revealed through the resurrection. They also continue a search for peace through the view of hope in the other/s that finds its source in the resurrection of Christ from the dead. Again, however, this chapter’s focus on hope tries to stay in touch with what we can see and know from the resurrection, and what we ought to do through the resurrection. I ask the reader here to consider the aspect of a tensioned exuberant-abundant-struggled turn to the other/s through courage and a childlike humility as an ongoing approach to hoping in the other/s in the contemporary world.

Chapter four (Doing) takes up the third core journey question of: what must we do with and for the other/s? The explorations here focus on evaluating and developing Moltmann’s trinitarian hermeneutics as a movement of ‘embrace of the other/s’. I use here his social trinitarian movement of doing with and for the other/s to bring into view Jesus’s childlike humility and courage of surrender. I explore a theology of doing for the sake of a world of peace through the idea and experience of rapprochement to an expectant acceptance of margins. I also explore an ‘embrace of the other/s’ in an interanimative discourse between Moltmann and Volf. I ask the reader to consider the aspect of ‘embrace’ within an expectant acceptance of plurality as a way of doing a public theology for the sake of a world of peace.

In chapter five (Conclusion), my approach is not to regurgitate the explorations and responses of the prior chapters but to let them stand instead as they are. The three questions of our three core journeys continue to influence these closing explorations through both their intersectionality and uniqueness. I also intend to continue here the search for responses for the sake of a world of peace and justice. I ask the reader to consider the tensioned unity-across-diversity of the three core journeys and how these may relate to the three-fold ‘themes or tasks’ of this study. First, in Christ’s mission of faith, hope, and love in and with the world. Second, in a public theology of embrace of all through Christ’s hope in and with the other/s, and third, in a personally experienced theology made possible in the ‘Pentecost’ energies of the Holy Spirit of the resurrection.
CHAPTER 2—Seeing and Knowing

In *The Experiment Hope*, Moltmann appeals against compulsive inhumanity and abuse of power ‘that lead many persons into apathy and despair.’ He asks from the church a new way of *seeing and knowing the other/s* through the humility, compassion, empathy, and love of the crucified Christ as follows,

Without liberation of the crucified God from the idols of power, there is no liberating theology! God is not dead; God is not a revolutionary activist. He hangs there from the cross of his love and glorifies his sacrifice through resurrection. The misery that we cause and the unhappiness that we experience are his misery and unhappiness. Our history of suffering is taken up into his history of suffering. In that way, his future becomes our future, and the happiness of his love is the resurrection of our life. To recognize God in the crucified Christ means to grasp the trinitarian history of God and to understand oneself and this whole world with Auschwitz and Vietnam, with race hatred and hunger, as existing in the history of God. God is not dead. Death is in God. God suffers by us. He suffers with us. Suffering is in God. God does not ultimately reject, nor is he ultimately rejected. Rejection is within God. In the way hidden in the cross, the triune God is already on the way toward becoming ‘all in all’…

Moltmann goes on to describe in a discussion on Dostoyevsky and the hope of prisoners the seeing and knowing of ‘other’ that should not exclude the tensioned struggle of loving our enemies. In *Creating a Just Future*, he draws on the *Sermon on the Mount* to argue for a creative love that exists in the embrace of this tension. In chapter four (4/1), I will take up an exploration between Moltmann and Volf on the aspects of embrace, but my aim in this chapter is to seek out a way of seeing and knowing grounded in the cross and resurrection event. I explore the question here: how does the cross of Christ help us to see and know the other/s? Moltmann highlights this chapter’s focus on the cross of Christ and how it might inform our concerns for peace when he asks,

If God was in Christ, as Paul says, then through Christ a new God-situation becomes manifest. But how does this divine context look, as revealed in the cross, and how does man experience himself within it?

---

83 I explore with Moltmann an expanded concept of the church made up of the “manifest church of believers and followers of Jesus” and “the latent church of the poor and those who wait for Jesus” (see *Experiences in*, 266), and a public theology (see *God for*, 252). Moltmann argues for not ‘churchifying’ the world, “but to [focus] all sectors of life on God’s coming kingdom and the changes that have to be made in all facets of life if life is to accord to that kingdom” (*Ibid*, 254). See also Bauckham, *Theology*, 137-150, and chapter four (4/2/1) which takes up Tripole’s critique, “Ecclesiological,” 19-35.

84 Moltmann, *The Experiment Hope*, trans. by M. Douglas Meeks (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress Press, 1975), 83. Moltmann’s development in *The Crucified Christ* toward a more ‘Lutheran’ *theologia crusi* takes up the suffering of the triune God and in the triune God in the Christ-event. See *Crucified*, 65-75. See also Denis Ngien for a clarification of the trinitarian ‘passibility’ in Luther’s theology of the cross ‘from below’ (*The Suffering of God According to Martin Luther’s Theologia Crusi* (New York, NY: Peter Lang Publishing, 1995), 135-178). Moltmann also takes up here Bonhoeffer’s ‘christology from below’ which he sees in Bonhoeffer’s quote: ‘only the suffering God can help.’ Moltmann writes, “His [Bonhoeffer’s] cross stands between the crosses of the victims of injustice and violence as a sign that God himself shares in our suffering, that he makes it his own and participates in our sorrow” – see *Broad*, 196.


86 Moltmann, *Experiment*, 78.
The search here is thus for an uncovering (or dis-covering) of exuberant abundance in our seeing and knowing of the other/s through reflection on Moltmann’s social trinitarian praxis. I am inquiring whether Moltmann’s theology of hope in the Christ-event affects seeing and knowing as an action of ‘surplus’ (or exuberant abundance). I also hope to set up in this journey in seeing and knowing a connection to the journeys on doing and hoping.

I note at the outset of this exploration a ‘negative’ element that exists in the act of seeing and knowing through the ‘objectification’ of the other/s in a way that dehumanizes them. As Moltmann argues, this negative element can also materialize through scientific methods that try to “…know in order to achieve mastery, to dominate.”87 However, I do not concern myself primarily with an analysis of the negative aspect of our seeing and knowing. Instead, I explore how our seeing and knowing can take up the tensioned struggle in the light of the cross-resurrection event as an affirming and redeeming way of perceiving the other/s. The search here is for a way of seeing and knowing that stays an open, ongoing deepening process of discerning the tensioned-struggled praxis in the light of hope according to the cross-resurrection event. In other words, the search is for seeing and knowing the ‘potentiality’ in the other/s through the Christ-event. I am exploring the idea and experience of tension in contrasts in the Christ-event. As noted earlier, this ‘tensioned’ view does not promote a one-sided view of the contrast and the polarization of dualities in the human-divine relation. I take up, therefore, with Moltmann his approach to analyzing ‘poles’ of ideas (such as self-other; knowns-unknowns) by not emphasizing their polarization as alternatives or as dichotomous but instead as ‘relations’ of ‘creative tensions’ in duality.88

I also investigate here the ‘possibility of doubt’ in the tensioned struggled turn to the other/s. The idea of ‘tensioned struggle’ speaks to the tensioned relationship between faith and doubt. I see this ‘tension’ reflected in the accounts of Jesus’s cry of agony in the Garden of Gethsemane: “My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as you will.”89 Put differently, this ‘tension’ speaks to the possibilities in the embrace of tensioned struggle through the suspension of dichotomies.90

88 See the discussion on ‘tension’ and ‘tensioned struggle’ in chapter one (1/1). I source the idea of ‘creative tension’ from Bosch, Transforming, 80-83.
89 Matthew 26:39 ESV.
90 Chapter four (4/1-4/2) takes up the aspect of ‘embrace.’ The ‘possibility of doubt’ references a ‘tension of consciousness’ in the sociology of knowledge. The term ‘tension of consciousness’ is translated from the German word ‘bewusstseinsspannung’ – see Alfred Schütz, and Thomas Luckmann, The Structures of the Life-World, trans. by Richard M. Zaner, and H. Tristram Engelhardt, Jr. (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1973), 21-35. This term articulates a typology of the ‘object-directed’ sociological move of not bracketing belief at the cost of embracing the tension (and implicit doubt) in dualities. In this sense also, Schütz and Luckmann show that the ‘waning of the tension of consciousness’ is a withdrawal from daily life so that “larger and larger segments and strata of the everyday life-world lose their ‘self-evidency’ and the accent of reality” (Ibid, 28). The ‘possibility of doubt’ also invites further discourses between the idea of a postmodern ‘age of doubt’ and the metamodern ‘age of depthiness and truthiness’ – see Van den Akker, Metamodernism, 147-150. Charles Taylor makes a similar move for a ‘tensioned common ground’ (a ‘Jamesean open space’, as it were) in his historiography of the ‘Western’ minority world. He takes up an understanding of a contemporary-Western social imaginary that may allow for the possibility of a ‘common ground for belief and unbelief’ and for its ‘cross-pressures’ to function in a unity-across-diversity for the sake of peace – see Secular, 636, 546-556. Peter Berger discusses the ‘possibility of doubt’ drawn from Alfred Schütz, as the ‘doubt’ in the ‘pressures of multiple realities’ – see The Many Altars of Modernity: Toward a Paradigm
The Christ-event also speaks to us of this ‘suspension of dichotomy’. Jesus Christ’s surrender in humility on the cross through his embrace of love for the other/s makes possible the ‘potentiality’ of the other/s. The triune God in the Christ-event ‘suspends the human-divine dichotomy’ in God’s turn to the other/s.91

However, before moving on to specific aspects of the journey of seeing and knowing of the other/s through the Christ-event (2/2), the explorations of this chapter take up several ground-setting elements of what I mean by seeing and knowing the other/s (2/1). The chapter then concludes with assessments and preliminary suggestions of responses from our seeing and knowing of the other/s in Moltmann’s trinitarian christology (i.e., for a continuing journey through hoping, doing, and toward a theology of peace) (2/3).

2/1—Setting the Ground

2/1/1—Seeing and Knowing Jesus in Humility

All references to Jesus as either ‘Son of God’ or as Moltmann also expresses it, ‘Child of God’,92 always mean Jesus, the Son of man and Son of God. Jesus’s life quintessentially holds together the paradoxical tension between the humility of surrender even to death and the courage of facing his persecutors. ‘Christlikeness’ in this study always references the aspects of surrendered humility and courage as united in the life of Jesus. My emphasis here on Jesus’s surrendered humility in obedience to God the Father references an aspect of his life and testimony that speaks to its antithesis to human domination and control.

In the example of the child in Matthew 18:1-5 Jesus gave substance to his teaching on a surrendered humility by placing a little child amid the disciples who were discussing the aspect of greatness.93 This scriptural event presents to this study a central relationship between the idea and experience of surrendered humility, and of human self-sufficiency and self-dependence. Several commentaries argue that the point is less about the child than about the issue of seeking ‘greatness by the standards of the world’ and its contrast: the humility of a trusting spirit and a willingness to be dependent on the other/s.94

Donald A. Harris, For Religion in a Pluralist Age (Boston, MA: De Gruyter, 2014), 29-32, 52-54, 64. However, space will not allow for the important exploration that may connect a natural ‘tensioned’ sociological topology to this study’s explorations of a ‘tensioned exuberant-abundant’ life for peace and justice in the world.

Section 2/2 explores the aspect of the triune God’s involvement in the Christ-event which informs our understanding of the other/s in the event as of a ‘unity’ in Tri-unity (or which we might also term as a ‘unity-across-diversity’).95

Moltmann, Way, 142f.

Moltmann implicitly explores the idea of a ‘humility of a trusting spirit’ in the example of the child that Jesus presents in Matthew 18:1-5. His few mentions of these verses (and of their counterparts in Mark 9:36-37; 10:14-15, and Luke 9:47-48; 18:16-17) nevertheless seemingly take up, first, a ‘latent’ presence of the child as of the poor in the kingdom. Concerning Matthew 18:5, he writes, “Jesus calls the poor and the children blessed because the kingdom of heaven already belongs to them” (Experiences in, 267). See also chapter four (4/2/1). Second, with Tillich, Moltmann takes up the idea of the child as a germ of the ‘messianism of the child’. This ‘Messianism’ here develops beyond former patriarchal-matriarchal traditions. He sees the kingdom thus as ‘the kingdom of the child’ (God in, 319). He alludes in this sense, to a development toward the pseudo-Pauline references to the cosmic ‘kingdom of the Son he [the Father] loves’ – Colossians 1:13. See also Ephesians 5:5.

I draw here on the ideas of Hall Harris, The NET Bible Notes, n.p., expressed in his comments on Matthew 18:4.
Hagner the New Testament commentator brilliantly describes the context of this scriptural event as follows, “The social insignificance, if not the innocent unself-consciousness of the little child, was the very antithesis of the disciples’ interest in power and greatness.”95 However, I intend here not to idealize the ‘child’ but to take up the idea and experience of surrendered humility.96 I desire to understand, through Jesus’s surrendered humility, the contours of human responses for the sake of a world of peace.

Jesus’s use of the child to contrast a humble servant-life against one that seeks power, control, and domination, also sets up the next chapter’s interanamatic exploration with Shellie H. Levine’s psychology of children’s cognition and Moltmann’s social trinitarian theology (3/1-3/3). However, here I focus on Jesus Son of God and Son of man who speaks to a search for the contours of a surrendered humility in humanity and creation. Jesus’s willingness to be dependent on the Father in and through the cross also sets the pattern for the following dialogical conversations that explore the cross-resurrection event as a context of surrendered humility.

The aspect of Jesus’s surrendered humility on the cross shows God’s love in its tensioned-struggled turn to the other/s. As noted in chapter one, the idea of tensioned struggle (seen in the Christ-event) does not in any way suggest that suffering or evil or negative theology is necessary.97 God’s suffering, described in this sense, is the suffering of love brought on by human evil and its violence. God’s agony of love in Jesus’s surrendered humility makes possible the human response against human violence and evil for the sake of a world of peace. The effect on human peace of God’s fathomless love in the world is love’s gift for a unity with God that embraces humanity’s difference, or put differently, is a gift of love that enables a unity-across-diversity. On the cross the triune God turns in surrendered humility to the hell of the violent other, the human counterpart, to show the fathomlessness of God’s love for other as a love that enables a unity despite the difference of human evil and brokenness.98

95 Donald A. Hagner, Matthew 14–28, WBC 33B; Accordance electronic ed. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1995), 517.
96 Matthew 18:4 states, “ὅστις οὖν ταπεινώσει ἑαυτὸν ὡς τὸ παιδίον τούτο” (GNT-T) (“Whoever then humbles himself like this little child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven” NET”). BDAG, 1104, shows in, ἄν μὴ γένησθε ὡς τὰ παιδία (“if you do not become child-like” Matthew 18:3) that being ‘childlike’ “…expresses the basic reality of something.” “ὡς” in verse 4 is used as a comparative particle, that marks “[the] manner in which something proceeds, as, like” – see BDAG, s.v. “ὡς,” 1103. We understand “ὡς” thus as a metaphor or simile rather than as a direct analogy. In his commentary on the parallel scripture in Mark 10:15, Craig A. Evans explains the use of ‘child’ (παιδίον), as “…should not be understood as the direct object” (Mark 8:27–16:20, Word Bible Commentary. Volume 34B; Accordance Electronic Edition. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1989), 94). To receive the kingdom as a child does’ means here to receive it as in the pivotal Scripture: Matthew 18:3, as Evans also states, “without presumptions of self-importance and self-empowerment” (Ibid, 94). About Mark 10:15, what is in view is not the child’s inherent humility, but the humility of a trusting spirit and a willingness to be dependent on the other/s (see Hall Harris, ed., The NET Bible Notes, n.p.). In all that follows, I take the word ‘childlikeness’ to mean an example of surrendered humility in Jesus as a signature contour, or ‘creative energy’, in human existence. Hagner, in his commentary on Matthew 18:4 also sees the message in Jesus’s use of the child as a call “…to humble oneself… ie, to be without status” (Matthew 14–28, 518). BDAG describes ταπεινώσει (“humility” as in Matthew 18:4) as: “to cause to be or become humble in attitude, humble, make humble in a favorable sense” – see BDAG, s.v. “ταπεινώσα.” 990. In all the following references to ‘humility,’ I take up an unpacking of humility in the light of Jesus’s ‘surrendered humility’ (in his life, death, and resurrection). See also the opening paragraphs of chapter three.
97 See chapter one (1/1).
98 See section 2/2/1 for the explorations on ‘God’s image’ and ‘difference’.
Can the cross-resurrection event in the sense of its example of Jesus’s surrendered humility be how we may understand life beyond the oppositional binaries of self-other, known-unknown, and human-divine? I am searching here for an understanding of the work of God’s love in human energies that breaks the oppositions of binary thinking. Might this work of love become clear through the tensioned exuberant abundance of the new-creational life and energies of the Holy Spirit of the resurrection? According to Moltmann, this resurrection life in the Spirit is present and experienced here on earth in anticipation of the coming eternal glory. He describes this as the theosis by which humans transfigure into the glory of the new creation. He writes,

The eschatological becoming-one-with-God of human beings (theosis) is inherent in the concept of ‘seeing’, for the seeing face to face and the seeing him as he is, transforms the seer into the One seen and allows him to participate in the divine life and beauty. Participation in the divine nature and conformity to God, flowering into perfect resemblance, are the marks of the promised glorification of human beings. The God-likeness that belongs to creation in the beginning becomes God-sonship and daughterhood in the messianic fellowship with the Son, and out of the two springs the transfiguration of human beings in the glory of the new creation. The image of God always corresponds precisely to the presence of God in the world, for it represents that presence. Consequently, it is never fixed, once and for all, but is transformed, in correspondence with the history of God’s presence in the world. What human beings are, is not thoroughly determined. It will only be known out of this divine history.99

Through his version of theosis, Moltmann opens here for us an exploration in the following sections of how the Spirit works in human potentiality—such as in the aspects of ‘unknowability,’ ‘openness,’ and ‘uncompletability’. We might say thus that the broad place of the Spirit includes the glory through the Spirit that appears in what is not thoroughly determined. The nearness of the close but dissimilar God gives shape to this broad place. The Christ-event shows that the way to that place is through the word of the cross in surrendered humility and with a willingness to be dependent on the other/s.100 This attribute of humility brings us to a brief exploration on the idea of the potentiality that exists through facing the other/s (here learned through the other as the humble and trusting child) for a more profound and broader unity-across-diversity in creative energies.

2/1/2—The Potential of Facing the other/s in Humility

To return to the account of Matthew 18:1-5, Jesus calls the disciples to a surrendered humility that contrasts to the disciples’ ‘interest in greatness and power’ (to use Hagner’s term).

Jesus in his teaching implicitly sets up a ‘potentiality’ for them of the greater wisdom and discernment of facing the child as ‘the other/s’. The child as other presents to the disciples the value of a surrendered humility as quintessential for life in the kingdom of God. Implied is the surrendered humility in Jesus seen in the child. The turn to the child’s surrendered trusting humility (and in the example of Jesus’s life) surfaces as the fundamental key (and potentiality) to a different kind of seeing and knowing of ourselves

---

99 Moltmann, God in, 229.
100 Moltmann, Source, 128f. See section 2/2/4 for an exploration of the relationship between the ‘cross on Golgotha’ and the ‘word of the cross’.
This different kind of seeing and knowing through a surrendered humility takes place in the encounter with the other/s: other as God, other as neighbor, other as enemy, etc. We might describe this kind of seeing and knowing as seeing and knowing the potentiality of the other/s (friend, known, unknown, different, diverse, stranger, alien, enemy, etc.).

This potentiality becomes seen and known through taking up the tension in dichotomy in the turn to the other/s as a way of walking in Christ’s word of the cross. Jesus’s life itself opens to us this seeing and knowing of ‘potentiality’ by his turn to the other/s on the cross. Also implied here is a conversion to God’s love in the turn to the other/s. This conversion is what Bonhoeffer calls ‘metanoia’, which refers to a shift from thinking in self-centered ways that follow from our encounter with God’s love for the other/s. Also, as Ricoeur puts it, the very idea of oneself implies otherness. It is a shift to allowing ourselves to see and know the other/s through Christ’s love in the messianic Christ-event. In other words, our seeing and knowing through Christ’s ‘eyes’ re-cover or dis-cover the potentiality in the other/s as in ourselves. It is a seeing and knowing of faith for or with the other/s that takes us beyond ourselves (our needs, our wants, our positions, our possessions) toward ‘Other’, and toward ‘the other/s’ now seen and known as ourselves.

Seeing and knowing framed through a focus on and for or with the other/s opens here the possibility of a unity-across-diversity shaped in surrendered humility. The divine love present in a trusting humility in the tensioned struggle of the cross-resurrection event prompts the need to pursue further this theme in human life (i.e., of how dualities might unite-across-difference). This fathomless love, expressed here as a surrendered and trusting love for the other/s, is a love across diversity and difference. It also opens the next section’s exploration of seeing and knowing the other/s through a creative-imaginative salvation-historical theology experienced from the abyss of godforsakenness.

2/1/3—The Potential of Seeing and Knowing from within the Godforsaken Abyss

As Moltmann suggests in History and the Triune God, the doctrine of the Trinity has two sides, one philosophical and biblical and the other imaginative salvation-historical. Although they form part of one hermeneutical process the debate is still open as to which one is the subject and which the predicate. The following explorations do not try to resolve the tension of these two approaches but to accept an

---

101 Moltmann writes of Jesus Christ as a ‘public’ three-dimensional Person: 1) eschatological person as Israel’s Messiah, and in whom we recognize the ‘messianic human being’, 2) theological person as the “Child of God, the God whom he calls, Abba, dear Father. As the Child of God, he lives whole in God, and God wholly in him. He opens this unique relationship with God to all who believe him and who as children of God, like him they cry ‘Abba’. They participate in Jesus’s joy. In him believers recognize the childlike human being” (Way, 149). 3) social person as brother to the poor; who heals through solidarity, and in whom we recognize the ‘brotherly and sisterly human being’ – see Ibid, 136-150. This three-dimensional view of the person of Christ gives a more all-rounded context for this study’s explorations on Jesus Christ’s humility and what the Christ-event presents to the contours of human actions in the world.

102 Ricoeur, Soi-Même, 11-15.

103 See also Moltmann’s discussion on the tension of the ‘two sides’ in History and the Triune God, trans. by John Bowden (London, UK: SCM Press, 1991), 80-81.
incompleteness or paradox as it were and to let them continue to speak to one another in discourse. This approach, however, does not mean that we cannot accept the predominance of one over the other.

Moltmann’s preference is for the *salvation-historical* starting point which takes up the three distinct divine subjects of the history of God as experienced and narrated for us in the scriptures—the history of the Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit. Arguments against this view from the biblical perspective bring up the problem of the unity of God which Karl Barth tried to resolve in a ‘nodal’ interpretation of the Trinity, as did Karl Rahner, following Augustine, in a more psychological interpretation.

Moltmann argues that the emphasis of Barth and Rahner on the oneness over the threeness of the Trinity legitimates continuing acts of social and political repression, control, and dominance. Moltmann, contra their more neo-scholastic theses, takes up both the Johannine attribute of a distinction between Father and Son (without severing their mutual indwelling) and a uniting of Father and Son in a way that does not deny their subjective difference. He allows “Believe me that I am in the father, and the Father is in me” of John 14:11a to stand alongside, “My teaching is not mine, but his who sent me” of John 7:16b. Further, the “we” and “us” in John 17:21-22 articulates the theological idea that in the Godhead ‘person’ and ‘relation’ are complementary.104

Moltmann describes this complementarity as a *perichoretic unity*. He charts a path here away from a *tensionless* homogeneous monistic (and thus christomonistic) view of God toward taking up the idea and experience of relational tension within the Godhead of the work of divine love in *perichoresis*. This work also translates to the work of the Spirit of the resurrection in human contours (i.e., in human life and its situations) of the *potentiality* of the new-creational life in the energies of the Holy Spirit of the resurrection. I also note the move in Moltmann’s later writings that breaks the ‘binary’ feel of Moltmann’s earlier social trinitarian theology through a deepening inclusion of the work of Holy Spirit in the trinitarian event of the cross and resurrection.105

Moltmann’s creative-imaginative *salvation-historical* approach thus takes up an understanding of *potentiality* in the new-creational life of the Spirit that we may contrast to the school of Mark Heim, Anthony Bartlett and others who have picked up the story of the cross in relation to René Girard’s theories. We may describe their approach as historical, though not so much as *salvation-historical* but as a literary-historical approach to the event of the cross particularly.106 Moltmann’s *salvation-historical* approach,

---

104 “That they may be one, just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they may also be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me. The glory that you have given me I have given to them, that they may be one even as we are one” ESV (my emphases).

105 See *Spirit*, 268-309.

106 See Bartlett, *Cross*, 132f, on a Girardian ‘scapegoat christology’ of ‘abyssal compassion’ that shuns doctrines essentialized through atonement theology. The idea of ‘potentiality’ opens to the ideas of ‘repeatability’ and ‘undecidability’ which in Moltmann’s theology speaks to a ‘not yet decided’ argument of ‘tensioned exuberant abundance in new-creational life in the Spirit’, rather than to Derrida and Bartlett’s more deconstructivist understanding of it (i.e., ‘no cleaned-up mess at the end’). I use the word ‘undecidability’ in Moltmann’s sense of it—as a more ‘provisional’ idea, and yet one that also has certain ‘deconstructive’ elements. That is to say, such ideas as openness, incompleteness, ‘in-conclusivity’, etc., as in Moltmann’s theology, though they imply a ‘deconstructive’ aspect, all suggest also a dynamic ‘fulfillable-potentiality’ as a way of understanding theology and anthropology,
however, also takes up aspects of openness that reflect provisional undecidability. In Moltmann’s approach, openness and uncompletness make room for the yet unknown, the ‘not yet’; and toward Ricoeur, makes room for seeing and knowing the ‘in spite of’ beyond the abyss, or hell, or nihil of the cross. So, how then can we understand the idea and experience of potentiality in our seeing and knowing made known from the godforsakeness and death in the triune God on the cross?

Moltmann, in his understanding of the abyss or nihil as the ground of the cross, references Hegel’s ‘idea of absolute freedom’ that rises out of the ‘absolute suffering or the speculative Good Friday’. Hegel’s ‘speculative ground of the cross’ is as an ‘abyss of nothingness into which existence sinks’. It is that place where it might be said that ‘God is dead,’ and from which emerges ‘the philosophical idea of absolute freedom’. However, Moltmann also takes up here the ‘historical Good Friday’ of Jesus to argue for an Easter jubilation of the victory of new-creational life that emerges from the ground of the abyss of sin and death and hell. He writes,

The Trinity is the theological background for the happening on the cross; the crucified Christ is the revelation of the trinitarian mystery of God. To put it in scholastic terms: the doctrine of the Trinity must therefore be seen as the formal, or essential, principle of the theology of the cross, and the theology of the cross as the material principle of the doctrine of the Trinity. This becomes manifest in the raising of Christ: it is only when we plumb the depths of the abyss in ‘the pain of God’ and in Christ’s eternal ‘death of God’ that we are possessed by the immeasurable Easter jubilation at the victory of life over sin, death and hell, and over the beauty of the new creation of all things in ... God’s eternal presence.

because in Moltmann’s theology they point toward an ‘end’ (or ‘new beginning’) at the eschaton ‘that God may be all in all’ (1 Corinthians 15:28). The ‘potentiality’ here is an ongoing trinitarian hermeneutics that encompasses the dynamic relation between human and divine; self and other, and known and unknown, which Moltmann describes as an analogia relationis (see 2/1/4 below for developments of an analogia relationis in Moltmann’s social trinitarian theology). We might also see this ‘potentiality’ in the invitation into an indwelling in the life-giving ambience of the Spirit of the resurrection to dis-cover the new in the relation between known and unknown (see Volf, After, 211). An in-depth development of the qualified ‘deconstructive’ aspects in Moltmann’s social trinitarian theology is beyond the purview of this study.


108 Moltmann, Experiences in, 306. Moltmann qualifies his use of ‘death of God’ in Crucified, 207, where he writes, “Jesus’ death cannot be understood ‘as the death of God’, but only as death in God. The ‘death of God’ cannot be designated the origin of Christian theology, even if the phrase has an element of truth in it; the origin of Christian theology is only the death on the cross in God and God in Jesus’ death. If one uses the phrase, it is advisable to abandon the concept of God and to speak of the relationships of the Son and the Father and the Spirit at the point at which ‘God’ might be expected to be mentioned. From the life of these three, which has within it the death of Jesus, there then emerges who God is and what his Godhead means. Most previous statements about the specifically Christian understanding of talk about ‘the death of God’ have lacked a dimension, the trinitarian dimension.” In God in, 91, he takes the idea further into a ‘death in godforsakenness’ that reveals why and how the triune God gives eternal life in Christ. He writes, “...by yielding up the Son to death in Godforsakenness on the cross, and by surrendering him to hell, the eternal God enters the Nothingness out of which he created the world. God enters that primordial space which he himself conceded through his initial self-limitation. He pervades the space of Godforsakenness with his presence. It is the presence of his self-humiliating, suffering love for his creation, in which he experiences death itself. That is why God’s presence in the crucified Christ gives creation eternal life and does not annihilate it. In the path of the Son into self-emptying and bondage, to the point of the death he died, and in the path of his exaltation and glorification by the whole creation, God becomes omnipresent. By entering into the Godforsakeness of sin and death (which is Nothingness), God overcomes it and makes it part of his eternal life: ‘If I make my bed in hell, thou art there’ (Ps. 139.8). In the light of the cross of Christ, creatio ex nihilo means forgiveness of sins through Christ’s suffering, justification of the godless through Christ’s death, and the resurrection of the dead and eternal life through the lordship of the Lamb.” So, for Moltmann, what goes further than annihilation,
Both Moltmann and Ricoeur take up the idea according to Karl Jaspers of the potentiality that exists even in the depth of the ‘abyss’ or in the hell of nothingness (as a ground of Jesus’s death on the cross of Golgotha). As Ricoeur argues, it is when we have “crossed the border, into grace, that we can look back on what we have been exempted from.” However, as shown above, this trinitarian movement from death to life in and through the cross is a move for Moltmann that takes up more than the theological ‘word of the cross’ (see 1 Corinthians 1:18)—it also takes up the salvation-historical ‘cross on Golgotha’ (see Mark 15:25-41).

The work of the Spirit in the ‘depth of the abyss’ then comes into our seeing and knowing through the experience of godforsakenness within the triune God for the sake of the realization and fulfillment of the ‘potentiality’ of the world to be in God (‘that God may be all in all’). With Ricoeur (also further developed in chapter three [3/2]) the resurrection is the ‘sign’ of new-creational ‘potentiality’ in the energies of the Holy Spirit of the resurrection, or as he writes,

[it] is the sign that now the promise is for all persons; its meaning abides in the future, in the death of death, the resurrection of all from the dead. In that sense Moltmann dares to speak of the future of the resurrection of Jesus Christ; if Christ is the firstborn from among the dead, then the meaning of his resurrection is incomplete as long as its promise is not fulfilled in a new creation, in a new totality of being.

death, violence, hatred, genocides, Auschwitz, etc., is the resurrection’s message of hope, “…in the God who raises the dead” (Ibid, 92). This hope through the resurrection speaks with both Moltmann and Ricoeur of the potentiality of new-creational life in humanity and creation. This hope is as Ricoeur argues, a logic of superabundance, and what he means by a theology of ‘freedom in the light of hope’. See Conflict, 402-424.

Jaspers takes up the dual aspect of Christ as reality and myth. However, as Moltmann argues, it leads him to an intolerance of ‘absolute claims’ (see the quoted text from Jaspers, Die Frage der Entmythologisierung, 1954, 88. See also Crucified, 76, note 15 and compare to Ibid, 97. Compare also to Berdyaev, Destiny, 54). With Moltmann and Ricoeur, the ‘limit-experience’ of the abyss (or nihil of godforsaken nothingness in death) is not just an experience of crisis and decision, or of a ‘distress’ as with Jaspers, but it is also, as writes Ricoeur, “…experiences of culmination, as in the parable of the pearl of great price where ‘finding the inestimable;’ constitutes supreme joy” – see Figuring, 61. Ricoeur is here writing at the ‘symbolic-metaphoric’ level of a hermeneutics of the text, whereas Moltmann, as noted above, would take up these ideas within a creative-imaginative salvation-historical approach. Ricoeur describes ‘the descent into the abyss’ according to Jaspers [my comment], “…[as] the most advanced point of a thought of limits, which henceforth extends from our knowledge to our power. The nonpower signified by radical evil is discovered in the very place whence our power proceeds. Thus, is posed in radical terms the question of the real causality of our freedom, the very same freedom which the Practical Reason [referencing Kant] postulated at the end of its Dialectic. The ‘postulate’ of freedom must henceforth cross through, not only the night of knowing, with its crisis of the transcendental illusion, but also the night of power, with its crisis of radical evil. Real freedom can spring up only as hope beyond this speculative and practical Good Friday. Nowhere are we closer to the Christian kerygma: hope is hope of resurrection, resurrection from the dead” (Conflict, 422). Ricoeur also points to what this ‘rapprochement’ means when he writes, “…we believe in God in spite of evil,” but it is also a cry that has its origin in the cry of the Psalmist, “How long, O Lord” (Ibid, 260). Essential to the inclusion of Jaspers, is his taking up of the ‘impotence of our moral power’ – see Figuring, 81, and chapter three (3/2–3/3). See also section 2/2/1.

Ricoeur, Conflict, 374.

See section 2/2/2 below for an exploration of the name of Jesus and the titles of Christ. For the relationship between the ‘cross on Golgotha’ and the Pauline ‘word of the cross’ (i.e., 1 Corinthians 1:18) see Moltmann, Crucified, 73-75, and section 2/2/4.

Ricoeur, Figuring, 205.
Through the fathomless love of the triune God in ‘the depth of the abyss’ on the ground of hell and nothingness on the cross, a potentiality for good, for love, and for wisdom becomes possible in humanity and creation through the cross of Christ.\textsuperscript{113} The cross seen and known only in the light of the resurrection opens and reveals the ‘\textit{in spite of}’-God; the ‘\textit{God who suffers}’, who enables a ‘work of mourning’ or a ‘wisdom’ in humanity, and who also enables the ‘potentiality’ for every person ‘to love God for nought’ and thus, as Ricoeur puts it,

\ldots to escape the cycle of retribution to which the lamentation still remains captive, so long as the victim bemoans the injustice of his or her fate.\textsuperscript{114}

The next section takes up this exuberant-abundant love that comes out of the ground of hell, for the \textit{potentiality} of ‘coming to see and know’ God in faith and reason.

\textbf{2/1/4—Brief Comments on a Faith Seeing and Knowing Through Despair}

Drawing on Kant, Moltmann argues for the potentiality of a faith-seeing-and-knowing at work within scientific reason. He describes seeing and knowing as a ‘presence of mind’—as an awakened wonder and awe (or astonishment). He writes,

\begin{quote}
[this] ‘presence of mind’\ldots lets us ‘take time by the forelock’, as we say, taking up the way the Greeks pictured the kairos. To live attentively means to be open for what is new in the moment and for what is once-only in the event, and to experience life with tense expectation. If we expose ourselves trustfully to what happens to us, we dis-cover the new in the reality we encounter.\textsuperscript{115}
\end{quote}

Put theologically, he implies here a tensioned ‘potentiality’ in the tensioned relation between object and subject as the \textit{image of God} in every human which he terms as ‘the traces of God’, or put differently, as an \textit{analogia relationis}.\textsuperscript{116} He argues that the more conscious we are of our existence and its possibilities, the more intense (i.e., impassioned by wonder and awe) our seeing and knowing of the tensioned struggle

\begin{footnotes}
\item[113] See Chapter three (3/2) for the ‘obligation’ of hope that remains in the problem of evil.
\item[114] Ricoeur, \textit{Figuring}, 261.
\item[116] Moltmann, \textit{Experiences in}, 73. Moltmann’s use of the \textit{analogia relationis} does not imply that he blurs the line between the divine and the human. The \textit{analogia relationis} is not a permanent endowment but a relationship with God, which God \textit{en}–acts anew and ongoingly with God’s beloved other—the human counterpart. In this sense, the human is a messianic \textit{becoming-human} in the likeness of Jesus Christ—human and divine (see \textit{God in}, 215-227). When Moltmann speaks of finding the experiences of God in the experience of love on earth, he does not mean ‘divinizing the experience of love’. Humans thus, sinful by nature, can only correspond to the perichoretic Trinity in historically appropriate ways. This ‘correspondence’ also means, however, that humans can ‘contour’ the social Trinity now in history toward the consummation of God’s plan at the eschaton, and in the later eternal ‘continuations’. I am aware of the critiques levied against Moltmann’s use of the word \textit{perichoresis}, which for instance, Karen Kilby and Sarah Coakley claim is a term misappropriated by him (see Kilby, “Perichoresis,” 432-445; Coakley, “The Trinity,” 243, n14). Though Joy McDougall critiques Moltmann for an ad hoc theological method, she shows Kilby’s critique as a misreading of Moltmann’s perichoretic Trinity and social trinitarian praxis (see McDougall, “The Return,” 182). Richard Bauckham also takes up a critique of Moltmann’s use of \textit{perichoresis} (see \textit{The Theology}, 161-166; \textit{God Will}, 155-226). See Moltmann’s rebuttal (\textit{God Will}, 227-232). See also the discussion on the human as ‘God’s image’ in section 2/2/1, and Moltmann’s understanding of the Christ-event as both spectacle and symbolic in section 2/2/3.
\end{footnotes}
even in ‘our despair’. In the following explorations, I do not take up this ‘despair’ as a ‘negative’. Instead, I describe the tensioned relation inherent in the dualities of human life. This tensioned relation is fundamental to creativity in the world and beyond. The Christ-event makes way for us to understand this space of tensioned struggle between the subject and object; faith and reason; reason and revelation; sameness and difference, and self and other.

In the form of life that takes up the paradox of a tensioned struggle, the cross of Christ brings the despair of our need before God which in itself is a way of seeing and knowing of hope.117 It is here (where seeing and knowing hope covers over despair) that the Christlike (humble and courageous) heart of faith may learn to see and know the divine creativity of grace in the triune God. It is also here that the human learns the creative response of faith that says not only ‘do it again, God!’ (reconcile us again; restore us again; heal our enemy again; teach us again) but ‘I will do it again,’ and ‘we will do it again’. Faith in God thus gives shape to how we see and know ourselves and the other/s as known and unknown; friend and enemy, and as through the triune ‘unity-across-diversity’ of the triune God.

The idea of ‘unity-across-diversity’ seen and known in the Christ-event frames the idea of ‘despair’ through a relation with the other/s. This despair through a relation with the other/s makes possible a hope beyond the despair. According to the Christ-event, the ‘lament of theology’ (as despair) tensions hope into the experience of believing in God and what we can yet hope for in the energies of the Holy Spirit of the resurrection. In other words, for Moltmann, this ‘lament’ is not static or repetitive but in transition through first believing in God to then a greater knowing and seeing of God and thus of the other/s. The turn here is to a ‘faith seeing and knowing’ not trapped in the ‘I am certain’ of onto-theology but that stays dynamically open to the ‘it is certain’ of Christ. This kind of ‘faith seeing and knowing’ allows despair to live in the tensioned struggle between the subjective self and the objective Christ so that we might say with Moltmann, “I believe in order that I may understand.”118 Moltmann implies in another sense also that we might say, ‘I know so that I can love’. The seeing and knowing of faith proposed here thus functions in the tensioned transition between the dualities of life such as between faith and reason, subject and object, and self and other.

The reader will see that what Moltmann (among others) has given space to so far is the transition from believing to seeing and knowing with the wonder and awe of exuberant abundance in the relation between faith and reason. Moltmann has suggested seeing and knowing in and with the tension of dualities in the cross and resurrection event that brings into view a foundation for a theology of new-creational life in

---

117 In all the following explorations, I take up the idea that what makes up an understanding of the Christ-event (or the cross-resurrection event) may differ for different people. The real (or ‘concrete’) and symbolic event of the cross and resurrection is the foundation of the Christian faith and serves as the main reference point to this study’s explorations. However, we cannot presume to know and understand the breadth, depth, width, and length of God’s love at work in creation through the Spirit of Christ. However, also, 1 John 4:2-3 articulates that we stand in the belief that any expressions of Christ in the earth cannot be contradictory to the name of Jesus and the witness of his life, death, and resurrection.

118 See Moltmann, Experiences in, 45-51.
God. This chapter’s explorations turn now to a seeing and knowing of faith through a pneumatological christology.

2/1/5—Seeing and Knowing of Faith as an Awakening by the Holy Spirit

With Moltmann, a ‘seeing and knowing’ comes into focus with the Easter appearance in sui generis of Christ risen from the dead through the energies of the Holy Spirit of the resurrection. The Spirit who fills Jesus with all authority and the power to heal also descends with Jesus Christ in and through the cross so that we no longer speak merely of a ‘christology’ but of a pneumatological christology.\(^{119}\)

The work of the Spirit in the Christ-event opens our seeing and knowing to this pneumatological christology. The Holy Spirit awakens humanity from the mere possibility of wonder and miracles to the God who wants the creation to wonder and to see and know the miracle of Godself. God allows this seeing and knowing of faith in the relation between the dual experiences of suffering (ἔπαθεν) and learning (ἐμαθεν). These dualities are not in dichotomous relation but in God-given tensional relation as they engage transition in the new-creational life lived in the Spirit. In this sense human faith in God enters the ‘abyss’ to dis-cover in it not only the broad space of the Spirit—a life in the divine, the power of life, the wholly livingness—but also (in this broad place) the nearness of God in both the agony and the joy of love.\(^{120}\) As Moltmann states also, Dietrich Bonhoeffer entered this abyss ‘released from anxiety’—he saw and knew that the suffering God alone could help the world in which he lived (its violence, its hatred, its exclusivity, its judgments, and its self-justifications).\(^{121}\) We could ask the question on Bonhoeffer’s action in reverse: Without the cross of Christ (without understanding the kenosis that this entails) could we see or know the abyssal despair of a violent world?

Romans 8:19, 22-23 shows that God’s saving purposes is beyond not only human and personal redemption but includes the whole creation.\(^{122}\) In this sense also, seeing and knowing takes on both dynamic and relational attributes, as in creation’s ‘waiting’, and in Christ’s apprehension of humanity and creation. Put differently, faith first takes hold of us, as it did Bonhoeffer—we believe to understand. Christ

\(^{119}\) See Moltmann, Way, 73-94. In this chapter, I limit the exploration of Moltmann’s idea of a pneumatological christology to the journey of a seeing and knowing of faith through the new-creational life in the Holy Spirit of the resurrection. In Chapter four, I take up the personal and communal experience of the Holy Spirit through an exploration of “embrace”. See also chapter five (5/1-5/3). A pneumatological christology references the work of the Holy Spirit of the resurrection who brings the transformative experience to the life of Christ and to humanity and creation. The Holy Spirit of the Resurrection physically animates the dead body of Jesus, and ‘makes our mortal bodies alive’. Romans 8:11 states, “Moreover if the Spirit of the one who raised Jesus from the dead lives in you, the one who raised Christ from the dead will also make your mortal bodies alive through his Spirit who lives in you” (NET). There is no more profound and broader example of the experience of God than in the creative energies of the Holy Spirit. The scriptures also describe the Spirit’s work in humanity and creation as the ‘how much more’. In Chapter three (3/2), I take up a more detailed exploration of the ‘how much more’ of the Holy Spirit of the resurrection articulated in Romans 5:10.

\(^{120}\) See Moltmann, Source, 70-74.

\(^{121}\) Moltmann, Experiences of, 43. See also Bartlett, Cross, 260-263.

\(^{122}\) “… For we know that the whole creation groans and suffers together until now…” NET.
apprehends us. The seeing and knowing that depends on faith and not sight rests on the grace God guarantees to all through faith in God. However, as we do not begin our seeing and knowing, we cannot end it. The Spirit who gives sight to the blind is ‘on the move’. The Spirit establishes a “broad place where there is no more cramping,” and where “We begin to love life with the love of God which we experience in the Spirit.” As Simon Maimela, the South African liberation theologian, also affirms: freedom in Christ does not ‘rest’ until we “all are free.” Christ Jesus ‘apprehends’ Paul’s faith and reason to a

123 Romans 4:16 states, “For this reason it is by faith so that it may be by grace, with the result that the promise may be certain to all the descendants—not only to those who are under the law, but also to those who have the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all” NET.

124 Moltmann, Source, 31. The work of the Spirit in ‘giving sight to the blind’ includes ‘spiritual sight’ and does not imply inferiority to physical blindness.

125 Simon S. Maimela, Proclaim Freedom to my People: Essays on Religion and Politics (Braamfontein, ZA: Skotaville publishers, 1987), Preface. Moltmann (with Nik Ansell here) does not imply a ‘doctrinal universalism’ or a ‘hopeful universalism’. Moltmann’s universalism is a pre-theological one that avoids the pitfalls of both a dogmatic universalism and a hopeful one and which Ansell describes as “a universalism of hope which is not a doctrine . . . but is a presupposition” – see Hell, 211. Moltmann roots his understanding of universalism in the “word of the cross” (1 Corinthians 1:18 ESV) which following Christoph Blumhardt he understands as ‘the true Christian universalism’. Here “all are sinners without distinction and all will be made righteous without any merit on their part by his [God’s] grace which has come to pass in Christ Jesus (Romans 3:24)” – see Crucified, 194-195, and 73-75. In discussion with Freud’s psychology also, Moltmann argues that the ‘word of the cross’ is not beyond criticism (see Crucified, 74, 292). Moltmann opens to the idea of the “…reality in the crucified Christ which cannot be identified with any Logos in such a way that it is replaced” (Ibid, 75). He connects this ‘outward’ reality to the crucified Christ’s critique today of ancient theology at the three levels of its expressions as follows, “…in mythical theology, in the form of demythologization; in political theology, in the form of liberation, and in philosophical theology, in the form of understanding the universe as creation” (Ibid, 73). Moltmann shows here that humanity is still today, inescapably religious. He also invites the critique of psychoanalytical theory to a psychological hermeneutics of liberation which he engages through a three-fold frame. First, he engages a psychological hermeneutics of the word of the cross (see Crucified, 291-315; sections 2/2/4 and 2/2/6 below, and for the aspects of cognition psychology taken up in chapter three [3/1 and 3/3]). Second, he engages the spirit of freedom (see Crucified, 317-338, for Moltmann’s political hermeneutics of liberation). The study takes up the ‘spirit of freedom’ as a social trinitarian theology which finds its expression in the energies of the Holy Spirit of the resurrection. Third, he engages the history of God. The study takes up the aspect of the history of God in the relation between the name of Jesus and titles of Christ (see section 2/2/2). With Moltmann, therefore, the cross of Christ is both ‘spectacle’ and ‘symbolic’. He also takes up an ‘interpretative’ framework for the ‘word of the cross’ and argues for the importance of its ‘translation as a theological language of liberation’ (in its sphere and dimension) in conversation with the other spheres and dimensions of life. He writes, “As human life is complex and is lived at the same time in a number of spheres and dimensions, a number of hermeneutical processes are necessary. … This does not mean that theology is dissolved into psychology; rather, Christian language should show its particular character in this area of experience and practice. Otherwise it would be of no interest to psychology. … None of the ‘substance’ of faith is lost in a psychological hermeneutics of faith. Rather, it gains a new dimension of its incarnation and enters into the utter this-worldliness of life as it is lived and obstructed” (Ibid, 292). As Moltmann indicates here he is not undermining the Reformed elements of his theology (i.e., see the discussions in God for, 190-208 for his apologetic for Protestantism, the religion of freedom). As I also understand it, he shows here that one enters, through faith in Christ, the new-creational life in the Spirit. His reformed theology sets both some distance or ‘separation’ between his concept of the latent church and Karl Rahner’s ‘anonymous Christians’ and keeps some correspondence. Moltmann sees in the idea of ‘anonymous Christians’ the beneficial Christian view of the presence of Christ in the poor, the victims, the abused and weak and oppressed who live in a pluralistic world (see History, 120-122). However, on the opposite pole, see also Moltmann’s questions posed to the Minjung in the context of its different christology to the Reformed solus Christus. He asks: “If Jesus is identified with the fate of the minjung … is the minjung then identified with Jesus and his mission so that they acquire messianic features? If the Messiah belongs to the minjung, do the minjung then become the Messiah?” (Experiences in, 257). The correspondences between Moltmann’s concept of the ‘latent church’ and Rahner’s ‘anonymous Christians’ seem to invite to Moltmann’s ‘latent church’ idea the critiques of Rahner’s ‘anonymous Christians’. However, space does not allow for further comparisons with Rahner and with his critiques. See also section 2/2/6 below, and chapter four’s first paragraphs and notes.
humility of heart on the move in hope and anticipation, which we might describe as a Christlike heart of pursuing Christ Jesus, the loving ‘approhender’. Put differently, we might say that through Paul’s apprehension by Christ he learns to suspend the dichotomy between a life lived for himself (his belief, his way, his reason) and one that transcends the love of life into the love of all (seeing and knowing the ‘no matter who’ for the sake of the word of the cross). The scriptures record the account of Christ coming to him on the Damascus road to turn his way upside down and to cause his heart to tap through the Spirit into something new entirely. The pneumatological and eschatological Christ had transformed him into a new-creational way of seeing and knowing the other/s.

Jesus calls humanity to a ‘tensioned unity-across-diversity’ seen in the recorded prayer of John 17:11b (“…so that they may be one just as we are one.”). Here he speaks of the triune God’s ‘suspension of dichotomy’ between the “us” and the “them” for a divinely sanctioned ‘unity-across-diversity’ in the human-divine relation. We see this ‘suspension of dichotomies’ also in Paul’s ‘face-to-face’ pneumatological encounter with the unknown Other whom he was persecuting. It is only when God’s grace apprehends him that he can see and know and engage the struggle of his faith in the tensioned reconciliation of dualities between self and other, and known and unknown.

Ricoeur implicitly affirms Paul’s ‘apprehension by grace’ when he writes, “It is only when we have crossed the border into grace, that we can look back on what we have been exempted from.” However, with Ricoeur also, a hopeful seeing and knowing bring into view a ‘struggle’. Hope finds alongside it anxiety or fear that works in a tensioned struggle with hope to give shape to what Ricoeur calls a ‘surplus possibility’. I describe this hope in tension in this study as an ‘exuberant abundance in tension’. Here, the ‘struggle’ of death works together with the pneumatological new birth of life. Lovers of God are new-born out of violence to carry the affirmation of resurrection life in the Spirit of Christ.

Moltmann also uses Romans 5:20 to show a pneumatological exuberant abundance in ‘tension’ at work in the relation between sin and grace. He writes, “This surplus of Christ’s resurrection over his death is manifested in the surplus of grace compared with the mere cancellation of sin…” (‘Where sin increased, grace abounded all the more’). ‘Surplus of grace’ as a pneumatological-christological experience of faith is for him birthed from the ground of the tensioned struggle at the Christ-event. This ‘grace’ comes

127 Ricoeur, Conflict, 374.
128 The scope of this study does not allow space for an extended exploration of the elements of the ‘struggle’ in American and Latin and South African liberation theology. I implicitly refer to the American and Latin Liberation theology of James Cone, Gustavo Gutiérrez, and Paolo Freire; and to the South African Liberation theology of Robert Fatton, Willem A. Saayman, Klippies Kritzinger, Bishop Desmond Mpilo Tutu, Gérard de Fleuriot, Gerald O. West, Peter Walshe, R. S. Tshaka, and M. K. Makofane.
129 See the introductory explorations of the use of ‘exuberant abundance’ over the word ‘surplus’ in chapter one, note 2.
130 Moltmann, Way, 186.
131 As mentioned above, Nik Ansell takes up a creational grace that ought to be not only a ‘surplus’ of the ‘Giver over the given’ but also of the ‘gift over the given’ – see Hell, 273. He argues that creational grace added to Moltmann’s eschatological grace, “…allows us to honour the ‘covenantal’ nature of the relationship between heaven and earth” – Ibid, 263.
from the raising of Christ from the dead which as an exuberant abundance of life over against his death starts the process from the justification of sinners to ‘the justification of God’. Whereas sin and death encompassed the old, the exuberant abundance of grace in the Spirit includes the new so that, as the Bible scholar James Dunn describes it, we see “the note of tragedy confounded into a triumphant doxology.”

Several ‘tributaries’ of thought have so far been engaged in laying down the groundwork for the explorations that follow. The next section focusses more specifically on the Christ-event as an event of exuberant abundance in tension revealed to humanity as the triune God who comes, who is present, and who redeems the creation with love.

2/2—The Journey of Seeing and Knowing the other/s through the Christ-event

2/2/1—Imprisonment and Hope

Moltmann, in his excellent analysis of Dostoevsky’s The House of the Dead and Crime and Punishment, notices Dostoyevsky’s idea of a resurrection faith from inside the ‘house of the dead’. Dostoyevsky accesses the very heart of why Jesus had to come and die for every human. He brings us to the human condition in need of grace and mercy that humanity had never known or experienced before meeting Christ—the Other, come to die for and redeem humankind and creation. In the story of Sonia and Raskolnikov, Dostoyevsky shows the face of the compassion and unfathomable love of Christ for the creation. However, hidden within this story is the effect in broken humanity of the turn to ‘other’. This ‘turn’ if true of all that stands for hope in the human and creational community shows us that a Christ for us is not enough. If Christ is not with us, we cannot know him in us. How do we see and know this Christ if he does not come to us as at the same time Other-unknown and known lover and ‘apprehender’ of humanity?

Moltmann references his three-year imprisonment in prisoner of war camps as “the mental and spiritual torment” that added, “inward imprisonment of the soul” to the outward imprisonment. It was within this personal torment that he saw and came to ‘turn’ to hope in God through the cross of Christ. This change did not come to Moltmann in his prison by his efforts. It came from outside of him and was thus dependent

\[132\] Moltmann, Way, 187.
\[133\] James D. G. Dunn, Romans 1–8 (WBC 38A; Accordance electronic ed. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1988), 300.
\[134\] Moltmann, Experiment, 85-99.
\[135\] See also how Bonhoeffer takes up Dostoyevsky’s ‘house of the dead’ in Letters, 358-361.
\[136\] The explorations so far have taken up in all of Jesus Christ’s actions in the Christ-event, the missional, public, and experiential themes that are the arterial ‘veins’ of Christian theology.
\[137\] Moltmann, Broad, 26.
\[138\] As noted above, Moltmann does not shift to a justification of suffering or legitimation of evil, sin, and pain. Following him, I explore the view of a qualitative difference between 1) the value of a tensioned struggle in the healthy rhythms of a natural and spiritual life and death (the natural cycle of death will also end at the eschaton), and 2) the negative consequences of premature and unnatural death and other victimized forms of life brought on by evil and sin. In this sense, the tensioned struggle embodied in a life with God differentiates from the idea and experience of the ‘negative-necessity’ of violence. The latter, however, brings on God’s agony of love for his Other on the cross.
on God, the ‘Other’, letting himself be seen and known as Other, as in the other/s who were faithful and gracious witnesses to him of their faith in Christ in that situation. Christ is the one who comes to humanity and creation in the depth of love to redeem all through the cross. We see here the aspect of a theology of grace for the sake of a world of violence which Moltmann takes up 1) under the influence of Bonhoeffer’s ‘kingdom of God’ theology and 2) with Christoph Blumhardt’s pneumatological trinitarian public theology and theology of forward-looking hope. Moltmann draws from this forward-looking hope that works in new-creational resurrection life through the cross.

Moltmann points out that through the cross of Christ the human encounters what is ‘alien, unknown and different’ and is confronted with the reality of ‘self-emptying’ for the sake of this Other, and thus for all the other/s. He alludes here to Blumhardt’s statement that “we fallen humans lie in the dirt—yet we are precious stones.” Referencing Blumhardt (and also implicitly Bonhoeffer), Moltmann shows a ‘kenosis’ that does not deny the gospel or cease to trust in the Christ of the cross who enables this kenosis. Moltmann turns here to a way of seeing and knowing as God’s hope from within the ‘hell,’ ‘nihil,’ or ‘abyss’ of the cross—from within imprisonment as it were.

Moltmann also takes up the idea that connects the complete work of Christ in and through the cross to the seeing and knowing of hope amid human despair. In other words, when hope came from God it was not a hope for escape from prison, but a hope rooted in the acceptance and understanding of God’s self-giving suffering love as ‘prisoner’ and with the prisoner; as abused for the abuser; as sentenced and killed for the freedom and life of the guilty and despairing. Though Moltmann does not make a dogmatic point of this, he shows here an exuberant abundance in the tension of resurrection faith birthed from within the darkness of hopelessness. The ‘darkness’ he experienced revealed to him a quintessential hope. Here, as within Dostoyevsky’s prison house, the light of God’s Spirit through Christ comes as Other to enter the utter darkness for the broken, abused, victims, and perpetrators. Through God’s love for humanity the vast chasm that exists between love and hate; God-self and human-other; hope and despair, etc., are all reconciled in the single event-double dimension of the cross and resurrection of Christ. Christ suspends in himself all prior dichotomies and paradoxes by opening the path in himself between the human and God. The death that could not hold him becomes the hope of freedom (through faith in him) into which the lost, the broken, the abused, the widow, the fatherless, the poor, the victim, and the perpetrator can gain access to God. Moltmann writes, “it is only when we men and women become wholly godless, in the sense that we dispense with every self-deification or presumptuous pretense of resembling God, that we can perceive the wholly other reality of the true God...”

---

139 See Broad, 97-112.
140 Moltmann, Crucified, 16.
141 Blumhardt, Gospel, 7. All mention of Blumhardt in this study references Christoph F. Blumhardt.
142 Moltmann uses Colossians 3:3 to connect an identity of faith to the solidarity of living enabled by kenosis on the cross, see Crucified, 14f.
143 Moltmann, Spirit, 65; Way, 214.
144 Moltmann, God for, 148.
In other words, the idea of a seeing and knowing of faith comes out of the chasm of difference between the human and God made known at the epitomistic place of human violence—the nihil, or nothingness, or hell, or prison—as revealed in and through the cross of Christ.\(^{145}\) Christ’s suffering is not about suffering itself but about suffering that took place for the sake of and with the other/s.\(^{146}\) Jesus Christ, who loves us, could not leave us in our darkness but shone in our darkness (our nihil, our death, our hell) so that we might see and know the light of Christ. As Moltmann contends, evil ‘only emerges in the light of what is good’ because it is God who ‘puts himself in a particular relationship with the human’. This ‘particular relationship’ makes the “dignity of human beings… unforfeitable, irrelinquishable, and indestructible, thanks to the abiding presence of God… Sin is [thus] the perversion of the human being’s relationship to God, not its loss.”\(^ {147}\) Christ’s love thus comes to enable humanity to see and know its violence, its death, its sin, its hell, and to enable through the Spirit ‘the completion of the \textit{imago Dei}’ that will be seen and known at the eschaton.\(^ {148}\) It may be understood then, that evil is not needed to reveal that love, but that God’s love is needed to answer the questions of evil.\(^ {149}\) With Moltmann, the \textit{analogia relationis} here reveals to us in the designation of the human despite evil as “God’s image”\(^ {150}\) the grace of the God “who holds fast to his relationship to human beings in spite of their opposition.”\(^ {151}\) That love leaves nothing uncovered and nothing untended and nothing uncared for. We know this in that Christ enters the abyss of death and hate to meet humanity in the very ground of its darkness and at the place which epitomizes its violence. God enters the godforsakenness of sin and death, overcomes it, and makes it part of God’s eternal

\(^{145}\) See section 2/1/3 above.

\(^{146}\) See Kierkegaard’s discussion of the difference between ‘useless’ suffering and suffering that benefits the other/s in, Purity of Heart is to Will One Thing: Spiritual Preparation for the Office of Confession, trans. by Douglas V. Steere (New York, NY: Harper & Row Publishers, 1956), 122.

\(^{147}\) Moltmann, \textit{God in}, 233.

\(^{148}\) Moltmann, \textit{God in}, 233. Moltmann’s abandons the anthropology of ‘substance’ in the \textit{imago Dei} in favor of its meaning as the human ‘in the relations given by the history of God’ (\textit{Ibid}, 232). He writes, “God puts himself in a particular relationship to the human being - the relationship in which that human being is his image. Human sin may certainly pervert human beings’ relationship to God, but not God’s relationship to human beings. That relationship was resolved upon by God, and was created by him, and can therefore never be abrogated or withdrawn except by God himself. Consequently, the sinner is subjectively speaking wholly and entirely a sinner and godless. But he remains at the same time wholly and entirely God’s image and does not lose this designation as long as God adheres to it and remains faithful to him. The presence of God makes the human being undeprivably and inescapably God’s image. Even the person who is God-less does not succeed in losing God objectively, if God on his side remains that person’s counterpart. Even the human being who is totally inhuman remains a human being and cannot escape his responsibility” (\textit{Ibid}, 232-233). See also section 2/2/3.

\(^{149}\) See \textit{chapter three} (3/2) for developments in the exploration in Ricoeur of the problem of evil in the light of hope.

\(^{150}\) We enter here the flow of Moltmann’s messianic-trinitarian narrative: from \textit{imago Dei}, then through faith in the social trinitarian dimension of \textit{imago Trinitatis} (life in the Spirit as community with the other/s in unity-across-difference) to become \textit{imago Christi} through Christ’s mediation (“\textit{to be his image}”) for an ultimate eschatological destiny of becoming \textit{gloria Dei}. See Moltmann, \textit{God in}, 215-243. As Paul also writes, “For now we see in a mirror, as in an enigma, but then, face to face” (\textit{βλέπομεν γὰρ ἄρτι δὲ ἐσπέρτον ἐν αἰνίγματι, τότε δὲ πρόσωπον πρὸς πρόσωπον}). The implication here is the value of an \textit{analogia relationis} of the whole person to the whole person and not merely of a ‘face to face’. See also \textit{chapter four} (4/2).

\(^{151}\) Moltmann, \textit{God in}, 233.
life. The cross thus radically changes the loci of the questions we ask of life from those of theodicy to anthropodicy.

Abyssal violence held in the pure searchlight of God’s fathomless love becomes a revelation to humanity of its evil and hatred against the One-sinless Other. In Job, we might see a response that Stephen Mitchell describes as bringing Job to a ‘hairsbreadth away from silence’ when he looks straight into the face of human evil and through it “into a vast wonder and love.” God ‘condescends’ to Job that Job might hear his voice and see his ‘face’ (or whole person to whole Person). However, this ‘condescension’ allows a broad place of grace (to use Moltmann’s term) that makes room for Job’s creative response of faith as hope from within his imprisonment. As noted above, the context of the cross does not legitimate the place of negativity and evil. Instead, it is the means how, through God’s self-humiliation, we might come to understand human evil and the questions humanity needs to ask of itself—the questions of anthropodicy. As Moltmann shows, God’s fathomless agony of love in death explains to humanity its condition of violence so that its state does not swallow up its potential. Thus, the divine love that could not ‘die’ and which the nihil of the cross could not swallow up, broke open the ground of death into the wonder and awe of new-creational life. This ‘new-creational life’ thus announces to us that without the resurrection we cannot see the cross. As Moltmann writes,

True Easter faith is the work of the Spirit, for believing in Christ’s resurrection doesn’t mean affirming a historical fact. and saying, ‘Oh really?’ It means being seized by the life-giving Spirit and experiencing the powers of the world to come… There is no Pentecost without Easter. That is obvious. But there is no Easter without Pentecost either.

We may also see here that the question the Unnamable asks Job (“Has God’s accuser resigned? Has my critic swallowed his tongue?”) is a question that God asks of all humanity in the ‘face’ of Jesus Christ who has revealed God’s fathomless love to all and for all from the foundation of the world to its eschaton and eternally. We may also recognize in ourselves Job’s reply (“I am speechless: what can I answer? I put my hand on my mouth. I have said too much already, now I will speak no more.”). We might take Job’s reply to mean that to him, as is also possible for all, the One until now unknown and distant to him he saw and knew and heard as the One in nearness perceived as not known at all.

---

152 See Moltmann, *God in*, 15f. The nihil as ‘world’ is not antithetical to the triune God. Later explorations (2/2/3) take up the Jewish-kabbalistic idea of creation that begins not in dichotomy but in the tension of duality within Godself, seen for instance, as God creating the world and at the same time entering it.

153 For my approach to the emphasis on an examination of anthropodicy, see *chapter one* (1/3).


156 See also Moltmann, *God in*, 90-93.


159 See also Moltmann, *Experiences in*, 160. As Moltmann puts it, “Strangeness is a category not of distance but of closeness, for it is the closeness which first makes the strangeness apparent.”
The cross thus, as Moltmann argues, stands at the ‘apocalyptic end of the world,’ and the resurrection at the beginning of the ‘new creation of the world’.160 A seeing and knowing of faith then comes out of the ground of despair (as hope within imprisonment) where human instrumentality no longer has the life to work out its own answers. This seeing and knowing of faith is the transformational point of new-creational life in Christ. The ‘new life’ occurs through our death—the death of the ‘old self’ and the birth of the ‘new self’—which is “created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness.”161 As the letter to the Ephesians further affirms,

But now in Christ…he himself is our peace who has made us both one and has broken down in his flesh the dividing wall of hostility… that he might create in himself one new man in place of the two and might reconcile us both to God through the cross, and thereby killing the hostility.162

However, this new life calls us to a ‘dying’. In us, life and death are in radical antithesis. Christ comes to the world to bring and to enable sight and knowledge of God’s love but waits for the creation’s creative response. Ricoeur, writing philosophically, describes this radical antithesis as follows, “I hope at the very place where I am deceived… In that sense reason must first despair … [but] This act of despair is already an act of hope.”163 He writes here not about the death of thought here, but of its claims to seeing and knowing differently. He speaks, therefore, of a ‘logic’ of the resurrection at work in the ground of death that is a logic of superabundance at the very place of ‘despair’. We also see this in Dostoyevsky’s ‘prisoner’ who without hope cannot live, so that ‘imprisonment and hope’ intensify each other.164 The cross does even more. As Moltmann shows, it makes it necessary for us to see and know the difference (to discern) between spirits. He writes,

What can endure in the face of the crucified Christ is from God; what cannot endure is not from God. The spirit of violence of greedy possession and arrogance cannot endure. The spirit of love, sharing and humility can endure.165

We might also say that this is how Paul came to decide “…to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and him crucified.”166 The cross shows us the inner unity that exists 1) between being imprisoned (accepting who we are without God) and being free (seeing and knowing who we are with God), and 2) in the unity between human suffering (God’s solidarity with the sufferers as crucified risen Lord) and God’s redemption (God’s liberation of the sufferer as resurrected crucified Christ). Moltmann argues that the

160 Moltmann, Way, 214. Moltmann argues here for the tension between eschatology and history, “History and eschatology cannot be added together, for if they are, either history is dissolved into eternity or eschatology is overtaken by history. The two can only be confronted with one another. It is this confrontation which we are talking about when we speak of ‘the resurrection of the crucified Christ’.” The ‘how much more’ of Romans 8:34 similarly articulates a tensioned exuberant abundance of eschatological promise through the resurrection. See also Ibid, 215.
161 Ephesians 4:21-24 ESV. See also Colossians 3:9-10.
162 Ephesians 2:13-16 ESV.
163 Ricoeur, Figuring, 212. See also Conflict, 415.
164 Moltmann notices this reference to ‘hope from death’ as follows, “The prisoner must hope… to survive, but hope is what really makes him a prisoner, letting him know that he is imprisoned” – Experiment, 90.
165 Moltmann, Source, 18.
166 1 Corinthians 2:2 ESV.
process through the resurrection is no longer the scheme of promise or fulfillment of an alien but of a present promising God—“the unique finality of man’s reconciliation by God with God.”\(^{167}\) These perspectives show that without a particular kind of seeing and knowing of the cross of Christ in death and in the confrontation of death and the unknown or otherness there can be no conversion to God’s kingdom of new creation life.\(^{168}\) Our seeing and knowing of faith as Moltmann contends, “…is resurrection faith or it is not yet Christian faith.”\(^{169}\) It ‘resurrects’ in utter newness from utter darkness—from the ‘house of the dead’ to bring hope to the prisoners. As he also writes,

If the ‘dead’ and the ‘buried alive’ are to have faith in God what else can it be but resurrection faith? What else can be the faith of sinners, who after all are the ‘unhappy’, the ‘suffering’, except forgiveness, reconciliation, and love? What can be the faith of the ‘humiliated and the insulted’ other than liberation?\(^ {170}\)

This seeing and knowing of ‘resurrection’ might seem ridiculous and even farfetched to some. However, we read of the testimonies of the disciples, and those who continued to meet this resurrected Jesus Christ before his ascension (refer to the disciples’ recorded encounters in John 20-21, and Matthew 28). We read of the post-Ascension encounters such as with Paul on the road to Damascus (see Acts 9:1-9). We read of the witness of the new-born communities of faith recounted in the Book of Acts. We also read of the history of Jesus whose actual life and death and intimate relation to the Father show humankind ‘the Son of God’ who calls the Father “Abba” and comes to make humanity ‘children of God.’\(^ {171}\)

This section has turned briefly toward a seeing and knowing of self-other shaped from within the ‘darkness’ of loss of imprisonment and despair itself. We now turn to further responses to the question ‘why’—why must our seeing and knowing (if it references the Christ-event) begin from within the darkness—the night (or as Ricoeur puts it, following Jaspers, in the night of ‘non-knowing of origin’ and in the ‘non-power night of freedom’)?\(^ {172}\) Is this ‘night’ a decisive place where all that we know and think we can do and all that we can see comes through an exuberant-abundance made known in the tensioned struggle? And does this tensioned struggle open for us that moment of surrender where we say with Christ, “Yet not what I will, but what you will”?\(^ {173}\) These questions also allude to a connection that may exist

---


\(^{168}\) See Blumhardt’s discussion on the universal effect of the cross of Christ in *Gospel*, 91-95.

\(^{169}\) Moltmann, *Experiment*, 85. The use of the word ‘Christian’ is not meant to limit the titles of Christ to what is merely ‘Christian’ in culture and expression. All references to a ‘Christian’ expression of faith here does not prevent or exclude the belief that the Spirit of Christ works in humanity in ways that go beyond the Christian expression of faith (see *Experiences in*, 132, 265-267). However also, that all such work of the Spirit must identify with the name of Jesus who died on the cross and was raised from the dead by the Spirit to redeem humanity from sin, death, and for new-creational life. See the exploration between the names and titles of Christ in the next section (2/2/2).


\(^{171}\) See John 1:12-13; Moltmann, *Way*, 132-150.

\(^{172}\) In chapter three (3/2), I take up also with Ricoeur the limit of our power as the “Abyss” (Jaspers) or ‘night’ in which the surplus of hope’ reveals itself. Which we might say, is a hope that comes from the end of our seeing and knowing. Hope here may rise through self-recognition and self-appropriation and show us the limit to our knowledge and power — see *Conflict*, 433-436.

\(^{173}\) Mark 14:36b ESV.
between the psychology of human experience and how it might inform a seeing and knowing of faith and hope.

I now take up these questions through several further elements of surrender to Christ that an exploration of Moltmann’s trinitarian christology brings into view.

2/2/2—Seeing and Knowing in Conversation with Moltmann’s Trinitarian Christology

Moltmann and Martin Kähler write that the death of the historical person Jesus on the cross calls all christologies into question and causes their constant revision. This ‘double conclusion’ means that all christologies must see-know or say, as writes Moltmann, “what it means for the Christ, the Son of God, the Logos, the true man or representative to have been crucified.” To say ‘Jesus is the Christ’ reveals not only Jesus in history but also through his death on the cross, Jesus as the Christ. The first conclusion (Jesus in history) sets up the fundamental reference point of Christian faith, hope, and love in its historical origin in the person named Jesus. The second conclusion (Jesus as the Christ) sets up the starting point for the effects and consequences of the crucified Christ’s rule of faith, hope, and love for the present and future through the titles of Jesus. As Moltmann states, “This [double conclusion] is the starting point for the real work of language and thought on behalf of the Christian faith.” The first (Jesus in history) points to ‘who is meant’ by the name ‘Jesus’ in his history. The second (Jesus as the Christ) points to ‘what is meant’ by the titles of Jesus and to what they say who Christ is for and before us today. I will take up below what this ‘double conclusion’ may mean for expressions of Jesus’s titles (as Christ) in new language and cultures that may have little to do with the ‘Christian world’ as we know it in the ‘West’. To continue, Moltmann offers here two arguments. First, he shows us a way that we might see and know a christology that makes inseparable the ‘origin’ and particular presence of Jesus’s incarnation and life in history (hermeneutics of origin). Second, he shows us the universal redemptive ‘effect and consequence’ for all things of Christ’s death on the cross and resurrection from the dead through the power of the Spirit (hermeneutics of effects).

174 Moltmann, Crucified, 86.
175 Moltmann, Crucified, 97.
176 Moltmann, Crucified, 86.
177 Moltmann, Crucified, 86.
178 Christ as ‘firstborn among many’ (Romans 8:29) is ‘before us’ (and with the whole creation) as he is also ‘for us’ in what he delivers us (and all creation) from (sin and death and their effects) and for (new-creational life in the kingdom of God) – Romans 4:25.
179 In chapter three (3/3), I take up the ‘exuberant abundance of hope’ in the eschatological-theological concept of “for all,” “for many”, and “for all things.” Though some scriptural texts reference Christ’s work of reconciliation for humanity, I take the broader position of Christ as reconciler of all creation—of all things (τὰ πάντα) in creation. ‘For all things’ here announces that the cosmic event of the cross and resurrection of Christ transforms all that exists. E.g., see 1 Corinthians 8:6.
Moltmann unpacks a necessary tension in the two tasks of theology around these two facets of Jesus’s life: Jesus’s *life on earth* answers the questions on Jesus’s death on the cross, and *Christ’s death and resurrection* answer the questions of Jesus’s life on earth. The point of this tension is that it is a paradox resolvable only in the convergence in the cross-resurrection event of both the name and titles of Jesus Christ. It holds the ‘double conclusion’ of Jesus Christ as 1) grounded in history in the name of Jesus seen and known in his life and death, and 2) his openness as Christ to the eschatological future seen and known in its continuing historically changeable expressions.

Moltmann describes the ongoing exuberant abundance in tensioned struggle present in a faith confession as “an anticipatory judgment of trust and confidence, and therefore, for all its certainty with regard to the person and mission of Jesus, is nevertheless provisional in an eschatological sense.”

Kierkegaard describes this same tensioned struggle as follows,

> The decisive thing is: for God everything is possible. … the decisive moment only comes when man is brought to the utmost extremity, where in human terms there is no possibility. Then the question is whether he will believe that for God everything is possible, that is, whether he will have faith. But this is simply the formula for losing one’s mind; to have faith is precisely to lose one’s mind so as to win God.

Put differently, a faith that confesses Jesus as Christ confesses Christ’s future as real but in so doing must also admit to a Christ that we cannot adequately define by that faith’s reality. The eschatological Christ is always at the same time *fully present* and *wholly beyond* our seeing and knowing. Christ is close and dissimilar, near and far, and yet, as noted above, Christ’s ‘strangeness’ is not a category of distance but of closeness. It is Christ’s closeness that ‘first makes the strangeness apparent’.

The centrality of this ‘tension’ seen in the life and death of Jesus in and through the cross refers to the exuberant abundance of his life over his death. This exuberant abundance of Christ’s life points us always to the *pro-visio* and *promissus* of Christ’s future through seeing and knowing Christ in the present. This *new-creation* seeing and knowing of Christ Jesus is, as Moltmann writes, “no longer a novelty, and his cross is no longer a scandal.” However, this cross opposes any attempt to make it fit into our reality, our confession, our institutions, our doctrines, etc. It confronts us (as the next section takes up) with a relationship with the divine loving God.

Kierkegaard has explored this dual effect of Jesus’s life in his ‘imaginative hypothesis’ *Philosophical Fragments* as the irreconcilable difference between the probable of Reason and the improbable of faith.

---

180 Moltmann, *Crucified*, 106.


182 A detailed exploration of a theology of atonement is beyond the purview of this study. See Moltmann’s discussions in *Crucified*, 256-266; and *Spirit*, 129-131 for the theme of solidarity with the victims, and 132-138 for Moltmann’s later development of the theme of atonement for the perpetrators which will we will take up more fully in conversation with Volf – see chapter four (4/1/3).

183 See Moltmann, *Experiences in*, 160.


185 Moltmann, *Crucified*, 106.
He shows the improbable of faith as the ‘Absolute Paradox’. Man lives thus “undisturbed a self-centered life, until there awakens within him the paradox of self-love, in the form of love for another, the object of his longing.” Kierkegaard defines ‘the Reason’ not in any abstract or philosophical or scientific sense (i.e., according to Kant’s understanding of the difference between ‘reason’ and ‘understanding’). ‘The Reason’ for Kierkegaard means, “…quite concretely the reflectively organized common sense of mankind, including as its essential core a sense of life’s values. Over against the ‘Paradox’ it is therefore the self-assurance and self-assertiveness of man’s nature in its totality” (Ibid, 99-100). ‘The Unknown’ then for Kierkegaard, “…is the limit to which the Reason repeatedly comes, and in so far, substituting a static form of conception for the dynamic, it is the actually different, the absolutely different. But because it is absolutely different, there is no mark by which it could be distinguished… Unless the Unknown (God) remains a mere limiting conception, the single idea of difference will be thrown into a state of confusion and become many ideas of many differences. The Unknown is then in a condition of dispersion (διασπορά) and the Reason may choose at pleasure from what is at hand and the imagination may suggest (the monstrous, the ludicrous, etc.). But it is impossible to hold fast to a difference of this nature. Every time this is done it is essentially an arbitrary act, and deepest down in the heart of piety lurks the mad caprice which knows that it has itself produced its God” (Ibid, 35-36). While agreeing with the ‘Otherness’ ‘in-difference implied and applied here, it is precisely this ‘paradox’ that Moltmann’s social trinitarian theology transcends in his following of Bluhhardt’s more dynamic, forward-looking hope in trinitarian-eschatological tenor.

We might also see in Paul’s letter to the Ephesians how Christ enters this human-divine paradox by reconciling the human and divine in himself on the cross. He ‘thereby kills the hostility’ that divides the divine and the human. So that in Christ Jesus, all who were once far off “have been brought near by the blood of Christ.” Here, one man, Jesus Christ, the fathomless yielder, enters the violence of human history as one man “to halt its free fall in the expenditure of life.”

186 Kierkegaard, Philosophical, 30.
187 Kierkegaard, Philosophical, compare 35 and 37. Kierkegaard defines ‘the Reason’ not in any abstract or philosophical or scientific sense (i.e., according to Kant’s understanding of the difference between ‘reason’ and ‘understanding’). ‘The Reason’ for Kierkegaard means, “…quite concretely the reflectively organized common sense of mankind, including as its essential core a sense of life’s values. Over against the ‘Paradox’ it is therefore the self-assurance and self-assertiveness of man’s nature in its totality” (Ibid, 99-100). ‘The Unknown’ then for Kierkegaard, “…is the limit to which the Reason repeatedly comes, and in so far, substituting a static form of conception for the dynamic, it is the actually different, the absolutely different. But because it is absolutely different, there is no mark by which it could be distinguished… Unless the Unknown (God) remains a mere limiting conception, the single idea of difference will be thrown into a state of confusion and become many ideas of many differences. The Unknown is then in a condition of dispersion (διασπορά) and the Reason may choose at pleasure from what is at hand and the imagination may suggest (the monstrous, the ludicrous, etc.). But it is impossible to hold fast to a difference of this nature. Every time this is done it is essentially an arbitrary act, and deepest down in the heart of piety lurks the mad caprice which knows that it has itself produced its God” (Ibid, 35-36).
188 Kierkegaard, Philosophical, 27.
189 Ephesians 2:13 ESV.
190 Bartlett, Cross, 257. Bartlett relies on René Girard’s ‘mimetic anthropology’. This is not my project. Bartlett has a distinct perspective based on Girard’s analysis. I am, as noted above (2/1/3), much more interested in the creative-imaginative salvation-historical approach. However, Bartlett has something to offer. There are parallels in his thinking between the idea of the abyss and the way it functions in Moltmann and Ricoeur. There are also differences. I find Bartlett helpful in the ‘openness’ ‘dynamic’ ‘potentiality,’ and ‘re-creative possibility’ aspect of his approach to the Christ-event, and I disagree with him in his concept of the ‘dual abyss’ (abyssal death and abyssal life), and on the Girardian and other more ‘radical’ deconstructive elements of his christology. These deconstructive elements take up a kind of ‘endless’ permanent ‘deconstructability’ (see Cross, 141-184). For Bartlett, death is ‘the sign of meaning’ (Ibid, 154). He develops his Girardian mimetic anthropology (Ibid, 151f) seemingly from a qualified interpretation of Kierkegaard’s concept of ‘repetition’, among others (Ibid, 143-153). In contrast, for Moltmann, there is still an eschatological fulfillment, but there is going to be a resolution of a kind. However, also with him, that in this moment we can never be sure of a resolution—we are still in that undecidability of the tension between the already of God’s promises (pro-missio) and the not yet of God’s fulfillment (pro-visio) (see Crucified, 107). So Moltmann is more theologically traditional in this sense and more positive or more positivistic in that he does see an
things and endures all things. He who has no need, or ‘cloak’ of power, suffers the loss of all things and endures all things for the sake of God’s Other—God’s Beloved—the human counterpart, and for all creation. The final breath of Christ within the abyss of human history, therefore, makes possible the encounter between untrammelled human power (its violence) and the ‘pure act’ of God. It is the fathomless nature of such a love that alone makes possible the impossible, as Kierkegaard writes, “[it] desires equality with the beloved, not in jest merely, but in earnest and truth.” As Bartlett writes also,

Here the majesty of his person is revealed, its integrity reaching and sounding previously unsoundable depths. Here is the paradox. History in all its contingency is held to a universal re-creative possibility by the measureless gift of one man’s spirit.

Jesus thus strips human power of all its pretense by his willing entrance into death (or nihil, or hell, or nothingness, or godforsakenness, etc.). What is paradoxically impossible becomes possible and visible to humanity and creation through Christ’s resurrection from the dead. This moment of the seeing and knowing of hope’s emerging is as Bartlett again describes,

It is in the near infinite loss of excruciation, in a leaden Palestinian afternoon, the degree point immediately prior to annihilation, that it becomes possible to fathom the depths of human impossibility, and there, in the passion of Jesus, affirm human possibility to a most passionate degree.

From that ground of fathomless emptying, which Moltmann takes up as a ‘death in the triune God’, arises thus for all creation the new-creational breath from the energies of the Holy Spirit of the resurrection. It is only in the fathomless sense of God’s fathomless love that we can term this act of death as the ‘gift of the cross’. This act of death defies all description. Jesus had already cried out in prayer that he might not have to drink its ‘cup’. Hate and violence had, however, made necessary the pouring of his blood for the sake of all living things.

The preceding explorations have briefly touched on the ‘why’ of Jesus’s entrance into the death of the cross, and we now turn to the aspect of its ‘tragedy’ in the triune God.

2/2/3—Seeing and Knowing through the Tragedy of God’s Passionate Love

What did God do in and through the cross that has so confronted all humanity and history? Also, what did Jesus experience as a human that might inform our seeing and knowing of the other/s? Moltmann has responded that we would not understand this Christ-event as God’s self-revelation if God did not grant the godless fellowship through Godself and with Godself.

end to all things. Moltmann sees a “God all in all” according to 1 Corinthians 15:28 and makes theological claims for it.
191 Kierkegaard, Philosophical, 25.
192 Bartlett, Cross, 258.
193 Bartlett, Cross, 249.
194 Matthew 26:39.
To grant this access, God enters and stays beneath (sub contrario) the human form of Jesus. Moltmann references here Nicolas Berdyaev’s developed trinitarian theology of the ‘tragedy of God’ to show God’s passionate love for humanity.\(^{(195)}\) He describes this ‘tragedy of God’ as “a single movement which originates at the center of the Trinity and is completed on Golgotha: the passion of God is the tragedy of human freedom.”\(^{(196)}\) As Bonhoeffer also writes, “God lets himself be pushed out of the world on to the cross.”\(^{(197)}\) He alludes here to the words of Isaiah 53 repeated by Jesus, “...he took our illnesses and bore our diseases.”\(^{(198)}\) God answers his appeals “...not by others but by himself.”\(^{(199)}\) The ‘tragedy’ of God’s self-humiliation in and through the cross brings together Moltmann and Berdyaev’s ingrafting of the Semitic

---

\(^{(195)}\) I engage here the idea of the Christ-event as both a spectacle and a symbol. Following Moltmann, I understand the Christ-event (single event of two dimensions – “a full stop and a pause” – Way, 214) as more than Ricoeur’s ‘metaphoric’ representation. In Moltmann, the resurrection is an actual event that happened first to Jesus (thus according to 1 Corinthians 15:20-23 as “firstfruit” of the resurrection). For a critique of my chosen approach see David Bentley Hart, *The Beauty of the Infinite: The Aesthetics of Christian Truth* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2003), 383. Hart, in a critique of the ‘tragedy’ aspect of the cross, quotes Ricoeur’s ‘metaphoric’ understanding of the resurrection (he refers to Ricoeur’s *The Symbolism of Evil*, trans. Emerson Buchanan (Boston: Beacon Press, 1967), 212). Of note, in Hart’s use of Ricoeur’s speculative hermeneutics of the resurrection, is the link this suggests between Hart’s paradoxical aesthetic-rhetoric theology of beauty and infinity (which “resists reduction to the ‘symbolic’” – *Ibid*, 24), and Ricoeur’s theological developments toward the more hegelian-metaphoric ‘resurrection in the community’. See also chapter five’s first paragraphs and notes. Hart understands the resurrection (‘real reversal’) to vindicate the ‘crucified Christ’ and not the crucifixion (*Ibid*, 326; compare to Moltmann, *Crucified*, 182-186). Hart takes up the idea of resurrection in an apathetic paradoxical *anologia entis* which he nuances to show that we can only understand God in an analogical sense and we must thus see God as always functioning beyond the two poles of ‘negation and identity’ (*Ibid*, 241-249). However, can Hart’s aesthetic-rhetoric-metaphoric dismissal of divine *patheia* reflect the fathomless depth of the agony of love on the cross as a response of divine love to human violence (see *Ibid*, 155-174, 28)? Moltmann and Volf take up, in contrast, a creative-imaginative *salvation-historical* argument which references the agony of divine love both in the ‘cross on Golgotha’ in the name of Jesus and in the ‘word of the cross’ in the titles of Christ. Moreover, both Volf and Moltmann understand the human-divine relationship as analogical – see Moltmann, *God in*, 232-233, and Volf, *After*, 211.


\(^{(197)}\) Bonhoeffer, *Letters and Papers from Prison*. The Enlarged Edition. Edited by Eberhard Bethge. New York, NY: The Macmillan Company, (1967), 360. Moltmann seems to draw from Bonhoeffer's christological ‘openness’ for his ‘two-mode’ view of church. Bonhoeffer writes [my comments], ‘And we cannot be honest unless we recognize that we have to live in the world *etsi deus non daretur* [adapted from Grotius: ‘even if there were no God’]. And this is just what we do recognize - before God! God himself compels us to recognize it. So, our coming of age leads us to a true recognition of our situation before God. God would have us know that we must live as men who manage our lives without him. The God who is with us is the God who forsakes us (Mark 15.34). The God who lets us live in the world without the working hypothesis of God is the God before whom we stand continually. Before God and with God we live without God. God lets himself be pushed out of the world on to the cross. He is weak and powerless in the world, and that is precisely the way, the only way, in which he is with us and helps us. Matt. 8.17 makes it quite clear that Christ helps us, not by virtue of his omnipotence, but by virtue of his weakness and suffering. Here is the decisive difference between Christianity and all religions. Man’s religiosity makes him look in his distress to the power of God in the world: God is the *deus ex machina*. The Bible directs man to God’s powerlessness and suffering; only the suffering God can help. To that extent we may say that the development towards the world’s coming of age outlined above [references pages 357-360], which has done away with a false conception of God, opens up a way of seeing the God of the Bible, who wins power and space in the world by his weakness. This will probably be the starting-point for our ‘secular interpretation’” (*Ibid*, 360-361; partly quoted in Moltmann, *Crucified*, 47). See also *Chapter five* (5/1) where I take up Moltmann’s social trinitarian community of Christ that lives in the ‘divine energies of the life-giving Spirit’. This ‘life-giving Spirit’ is “the broad place which surrounds us from every side and brings us to the free unfolding of new life” – see *Experiences in*, 330.

\(^{(198)}\) Matthew 8:17 ESV.

Kabbala of God’s self-limitation. 200 Moltmann shows here that God’s self-revelation as pro nobis (for us) means inseparably also the “reality of reconciliation in Christ.” 201 The pro nobis in Christ encloses the human and the world and discloses an open and inclusive circle in the human-divine relation. 202 

To create the world, God must create it in the freedom of God’s image and yet God gives birth to a ‘Divine tragedy’. 203 The ‘tragedy’ is in the mystery of freedom which “contains both the mystery of evil and that of creation.” 204 This ‘irrational’ mystery in freedom, shows its ‘independence’ to the Divine creation and to God’s desire for the freedom of God’s image on earth. 205 According to Berdyaev this irrational ‘mystery of freedom’ “does not imply the existence of another being claiming equality with Divine Being, it does not in the least imply an ontological dualism.” 206 This ‘mystery of freedom’ also opens to the idea and experience of evil as not a ‘being’ but a ‘doing’ which we will develop further in an interanimative exploration between Ricoeur and Moltmann in chapter three (3/2–3/3). 207

Berdyaev here shows the experience of suffering and evil not as a ‘necessity’ but as the ‘experience of freedom along the path’ to the human liberation to God’s love. 208 He also explains that we cannot interpret evil conceptually but ‘only mythologically and symbolically’. He writes,

> Evil and suffering exist because freedom exists; but freedom has no foundation of existence, it is a frontier. But because freedom exists, God Himself suffers and is crucified. The Divine love and sacrifice are an answer to the mystery of freedom wherein evil and suffering have their origin. Divine love and sacrifice are likewise freedom. 209

Moltmann follows Berdyaev on this by arguing that “what is evil only emerges in the light of what is good.” 210 As noted above, however, the ‘Divine tragedy’ rests with God who alone can respond to the human’s abuse of that freedom given by grace. God does so on the cross of Christ where God takes up in

---

200 Moltmann, History, 24. For a detailed discussion of Moltmann’s position on the aspect of God’s ‘self-limitation’ on the cross, see Ansell, Hell, 146f. As I understand it, although Ansell accepts Moltmann’s universalism of hope and the cross he argues that Moltmann’s use of Luria’s zimzum is too negative a view of creation (thus also of time). See also, Ibid, 372f.

201 Moltmann, Hope, 15.

202 Moltmann’s use of Kabbalistic theology as God’s self-limitation has links to both Abraham Heschel and Nicolas Berdyaev. I take up here this theological point in Moltmann with Berdyaev. Like Moltmann’s approach, Berdyaev argues against a static objectification of philosophy-theology, and for a dynamism of co-creativity through the impetus of the triune God revealed in the Christ-event (see Creative, 92). He opens the ‘circle’ of possible philosophical-theological responses toward an eschatological, and existential anthropodicy of Godmanhood (Ibid, 18; see also chapter one [1/2]). However, I also note Nik Ansell’s clarification of the non-existential aspect of ‘godforsakenness’ in Moltmann’s mature thought – see Hell, 151.

203 Berdyaev, Spirit, 115.

204 Berdyaev, Spirit, 115.

205 See Moltmann’s discussion of Berdyaev’s ‘tragedy in God’ in, Trinity, 42-47.

206 Berdyaev, Spirit, 114.

207 I postpone Ricoeur’s analysis of the problem of evil to chapter three (3/2) because of the connections-tensions he develops in the discussion between the problem of evil and freedom in the light of hope.

208 Berdyaev, Spirit, 118; Destiny, 34. If with Berdyaev, the human is not ‘forced by grace’ but able to accept it or reject it freely, then grace cannot act on the human either independently of his or her freedom or in conflict with human freedom. In the former, we have something like an exclusivity, such as in the doctrine of predestination, and in the latter, we have a God who does not give grace freely.

209 Berdyaev, Spirit, 115

210 Moltmann, God in, 233. See also section 2/2/1.
Godself all the suffering, agony, evil, rejection, abuse, violence, curses, forsakenness, guilt, and hatred of the world. Human and creational suffering and its attendant effects all come about through the twin pseudo-powers of sin (or, evil), and death.\(^{211}\) Moltmann writes of the rupture or bifurcation this causes in the triune God. This ‘rupture’ takes up “the whole uproar of history within itself” so that we might see and know in our humanity “…there is no suffering which in this history of God is not God’s suffering.”\(^{212}\)

Paul Althaus writes, “The Godhead is there hidden under the manhood, only open to faith and not to sight. It is therefore beyond any possibility of a theory. That this is the case, that God enters into the hiddenness of his Godhead beneath the human nature, is kenosis.”\(^{213}\) We see here not only Christ at work in the cross-resurrection event. We also see the Trinity without whom the idea of Christ’s humanity or of the crucifixion or of the constant and eternal presence of God on earth makes no sense. This event, therefore, does not stand for the human-divine duality and dichotomy. Instead, it shows us through a trinitarian starting point a “trinitarian event between the Son and the Father.”\(^{214}\)

To speak as Moltmann does of the Christ-event as an event occurring within the triune God one must move, “from the exterior of the mystery which is called ‘God,’ to the interior, which is trinitarian.”\(^{215}\) The Trinity in the Christ-event interprets faith as an eschatological event to the eschaton. Implicit in the Pauline sentence, “that God may be all in all,” is that “the Trinity may be all in all.”\(^{216}\) The Christ-event includes thus a ‘Spirit christology’ within a trinitarian christology.

Moltmann shows that it is in the presence of the Spirit that God reveals himself to Jesus as “Abba.” Through the Spirit, Jesus comes to see and know that he is the ‘Son’ of the Father’ and it is the Spirit who

---

\(^{211}\) I take up an exploration on the relationship between hope and evil in Ricoeur’s hermeneutical philosophy in chapter three (3/2-3/3) in conversation with Moltmann.

\(^{212}\) Moltmann, Crucified, 246. See also Way, 172-181, where he shows, contra his critics, that (his emphases) “…a theology of surrender is misunderstood and perverted into its very opposite unless it is grasped as being the theology of the pain of God, which means the theology of the divine co-suffering or com-passion” —Ibid, 178.

\(^{213}\) Quoted in, Moltmann, Crucified, 206.

\(^{214}\) Moltmann, Crucified, 245. Moltmann, in seeking to overcome here the dichotomy between the immanent and the economic Trinity leans toward Rahner’s understanding but lays out in Spirit, 290, a position that seems to be neither a duality (“too wide-meshed a grid”) nor a non-unique unity. Volf, in his discussion of a ‘trinitarian social vision’, illuminates with Moltmann this later position. He writes, “…I presuppose both the unity of and the distinction between the immanent and the economic Trinity; and though the immanent Trinity serves as the ultimate horizon, I build mainly on the narrative of the Triune God’s engagement with the world” —see Volf, “The Trinity is our ‘Social program’: The Doctrine of the Trinity and the Shape of Social Engagement,” Modern Theology, 14/3 (July 1998), 407.

\(^{215}\) Moltmann, Crucified, 204. See also the discussion on the respective suffering of the persons of the Trinity, Ibid, 243-249. As Moltmann also writes, “The whole Trinity is caught up in the movement toward self-surrender, which in the passion of Christ reaches lost men and women and is revealed to them” — Way, 178. See also the important argument Berdyaev presents between the definition of ‘personality’ and the ‘self. Personality, from its very nature, presupposes ‘the other’—“God as a Person, presupposes His Other, another Person, and is love and sacrifice’. Self presupposes something outside it, a not-self” … “which is a negative limit” —Destiny, 57. From a seemingly ‘opposite’ direction—at the level of ‘the self’—Ricoeur takes up a similar discussion in his examination of the two poles—finite and infinite. At the level of ‘action’ (or, ‘practical synthesis’), he argues for a tensioned process between ‘character’ (finite), and quest for happiness (infinite) that synthesizes into respect, and dignity of the other/s, and that accepts and treats the other as a person. He establishes here a ‘language of otherness’ that emerges before the negation of finitude. In other words, ‘character’ ‘already’ postulates ‘Other’ or the ‘not-I’ — see, Fallible Man, trans. by Charles A. Kelbley (New York, NY: Fordham University Press, 1986), 47-79.

\(^{216}\) Moltmann, Crucified, 255.
baptizes him and leads him to the cross and to death “for all” (humanity and creation). The same Spirit raises him from the dead “as the divine Kyrios” to be the head of the church his body.217 Throughout the New Testament, we see this collaboration with the Spirit and the Father. Moltmann writes that it makes Jesus’s life history “at heart a ‘trinitarian history of God’. ”218 To go further, we can speak not only of Jesus’s kenosis on the cross but also of the Spirit’s and the Father’s. As the Son descends into hell, so the Spirit experiences a kenosis of the utter darkness of the end of its energies.219 The suffering on the cross speaks thus also to the Father’s suffering who suffered the death of his Son “in the infinite grief of love.”220

In the cry of lament: ‘God, why have you forsaken me’ comes God’s response to the ‘divine tragedy’ of human freedom? It causes the ‘bifurcation in God’ and yet out of the depths of this divine lament the world sees (and knows) for the first time the glorious rays of the eternal kingdom of God on earth. And with its ‘glorious rays’ comes an eternal hope for every person and creation. Therefore, the cry now rises from the lips of the new creation in Christ, “Maranatha, come, Lord Jesus.”221 These are not the cries of the triumphant but of the dumb, the broken, the humble, the poor, the orphans, the widows, and the imprisoned who have seen their brokenness, and all humanity in the face of Christ’s fathomless love for them. So that the Christ-event for them in their situations produces expectant creativity through Eucharist in the cry “Maranatha.”222 Therefore, they take up the shout of victory, ‘Death, where is your sting.’ They shout not only for themselves but for the hope they see and know. The triune God makes this hope real among them through Christ’s cross and resurrection. They expect the “great banquet of the nations at which all human beings will be satisfied.”223

We may see this moment already started in the cry of lament (“My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?” – Mark 14:34) which no sooner it expired, a man of a different culture, a Centurion, echoed it in praise—“Truly this man was the Son of God!” (Mark 15:39). As Ricoeur argues, here meet together the “moment of lamentation, at the limit of accusation, and the moment of praise” as the two ‘pillars of prayer’.224 Here also, we might reflect on the joining of the two parts of Psalm 22 which begins in the agony of love in death (“My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?” Psalm 22:1) and ends with the implied promise of the cosmic perspective of eternal salvation,

And he who did not keep his life—his descendants shall serve him. It shall be told concerning the Lord to a generation that will come; and they shall declare his righteousness to a people about to be born—what he has done!225

---

217 Moltmann, Way, 73.
218 Moltmann, Way, 74.
219 See Moltmann, Spirit, 102.
220 See Moltmann’s discussion on Golgotha as “God’s theodicy trial” in Way, 177. See also Crucified, 243f.
221 Revelation 22:20. See Moltmann, Spirit, 73.
223 Moltmann, Way, 339.
224 Ricoeur, Critique, 153.
225 Psalm 22:31-32. Translation of Psalm 22:31-32 (as verses 32-33) by Peter Craigie, Psalms 1–50, WBC 19; Accordance electronic ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1983), 195. Craigie comments in this concluding cry of thanksgiving that a move takes place from ‘the individual perspective of the earlier portion’ toward ‘a more cosmic perspective’ and yet the parts remain inseparable (Ibid, 201). My theological interpretation takes up this inseparable
Paul also showed Christ as our peace who created “in himself one new man... so making peace” that both those far and near might have access to the Father through one Spirit. Moreover, that in him we might together be “…a dwelling place for God by the Spirit.”

How then does this trinitarian christology so described penetrate and tear down the wall of ‘partition’ and doctrinal hostility that makes access to God conditional on human action, or on institutions?

We might see here that Psalm 22 reveals we can learn the humility of love in the presence of the tragedy of God’s love in death. We can learn this ‘humility of love’ since such a death resulted in the overflow of new-creational life in the Spirit and God’s victory over death on the cross. Put differently, the call to enter the ‘word of the cross’ is a call through death into eternal life. This call thus implies a moment by moment resurrection life lived in the humility of ‘daily death’ through a new way of seeing and knowing the other/s in the Spirit.

2/2/4—Further Comments on the ‘word of the cross’ as Christ’s Work on Earth

Paul writes of Christ’s ‘word of the cross’—as folly to those who are perishing and the power of God in surrendered humility and trust of God to those who are being saved. In the bleakness of the death in God, in the ground of the cross; of hell; of the nihil; where the triune God enters non-being, in the night of the cross, is the place where our abandoned faith can be born. In the words of H. J. Iwand,

[his] faith must be born where it is abandoned by all tangible reality; it must be born of nothingness, it must taste this nothingness and be given it to taste in a way that no philosophy of nihilism can imagine.

Concerning 1 Corinthians 1:25-31, Moltmann describes this ‘word of the cross’ as,

[what] liberates dehumanized man from the fatal concern for deification, and it is no accident that in the first chapter of the First Epistle to the Corinthians, Paul draws attention to the concrete social consequences, in order to demonstrate the power which is contained in the weakness and folly of the crucified God.

The ‘word of the cross’ as Moltmann argues,

[is] the origin of faith in the cross... It is the suffering of God in Christ, rejected, and killed in the absence of God, which qualifies Christian faith as faith, and as something different from the projection

---

tensional connection between lament and praise which also points to the tensioned struggle in the Christ-event and its implications for the sake of a world of peace. We might also see here the response the triune God gives to human violence and ‘power initiatives’ that come through not seeing and not knowing the quintessential value of the other/s in humanity and creation.

226 See Ephesians 2:14-22 ESV.
227 To reiterate, the ‘word of the cross’ references the Pauline text, 1 Corinthians 1:18 ESV.
228 The idea of a ‘death in God’ in Moltmann’s theology of the cross seems to draw from a deep tradition in Christian thinking, such as, for instance, from the Lutheran hymn, “O Darkest Woe” with reference to verses two and five – http://www.lutheranchoralbook.com/texts/o-darkest-woe, accessed May 15, 2018.
229 Unpublished material by H. J. Iwand quoted in Moltmann, Crucified, 36.
230 Moltmann, Crucified, 70.
of man’s desire. The modern criticism of religion can attack the whole world of religious Christianity, but not this unreligious cross.  

Moltmann describes this ‘word of the cross’ as “the criterion of … truth and therefore the critique of … untruth.”  

It is both “celebration of faith, and a practical following of Jesus.”  

It abolishes the division between the sacred and the profane, the human and the divine, etc. It points to a movement of the Trinity from below as seen and known through the life of Jesus whom his accusers described as ‘the friend of tax-collectors and sinners’. To these Jesus replied, “Go and learn what this saying means: ‘I want mercy and not sacrifice.’ For I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners.”  

God, in the desire for a relationship with the Beloved counterpart, answers in Godself through the Christ-event the ‘divine tragedy’ birthed at the creation of the world. God preserves the creation by entering it through the suffering of love. God makes possible an eternal intimate divine-human relationship. This is what the metaphor of a ‘new city’ Jerusalem is all about—it is a building ‘in the Spirit’ and not a temple made with human hands. However, this ‘building’ does not exist somewhere in the beyond. This ‘building’ is at the same time right here on earth and open to the ‘heavens’. As Moltmann points out, “When God comes to ‘dwell’ in his creation and to rest in this dwelling, then all things will participate in his eternal livingness, just as he will share in their finitude… [the] heavenly and the earthly will interpenetrate each other without intermingling.”  

He speaks here of a new way of seeing and knowing God on earth. Blumhardt who influences Moltmann in this view writes,

The goal was initially an earthly one, not as we Christians think a heavenly one but a heavenly one on earth … so that God’s name may be hallowed on earth, so that there may be God’s kingdom on earth, and so that his will may be done on earth. The earth is to proclaim eternal life . . . God on earth … Jesus … the defiance against poverty, sin, and all misery.

Berdyaev argues similarly against a religious consciousness hampered by a negative theology of law, guilt, and sin. He contends for what the Spirit makes possible. The Spirit works to turn human consciousness toward “religious life, after the redemption, when God in man is immanent.”

The work of the Spirit might also mean via Kierkegaard that in this Christ-event’s actuality in history the self can find a unity between both Christ’s possibility and human necessity. What is radical about the Christ-event is its antithetical radicalness that takes place in the earth and becomes to humanity and creation the ‘word of the cross’. As Moltmann argues,
Here we have an antithesis… Christ’s death was brought about by human beings—his raising from the dead is an act on God’s part. The cross of Christ stands in the time of this present world of violence and sin—the risen Christ lives in the time of the coming world of the new creation in justice and righteousness.…

The self here does not lose itself to either a docetic or Arian view of Christ. This chapter’s explorations now come to some developments of aspects of a personal journey in search of humility.

2/2/5—Aspects of a Personal Journey in Seeing and Knowing the other/s

This exploration of seeing and knowing began with an admission of my tacit presuppositions. I admit here to the need of an ongoing attitude of openness in humility to the other/s, and to the relativity of my position. For instance, I qualify my understanding of theology for its male heterosexual, middle-class perspective and Eurocentric-French heritage and Francophone-Mauritian culture and upbringing and White South-African influence, and of late, a North American ‘Western’ influence. My relativity (in this same sense of one-sidedness) compels a ‘journey away from’ any exclusivist perspective. I hope to discover in this kind of ‘qualitative tensioned descent’ the value of inviting the challenges and enrichment of the truths and traditions and perspectives of the other/s.

This ‘descent’ of how we see and know our place in the milieu of an unfolding pluralism in contemporary society matches well with Miroslav Volf’s description of the place of theology in the contemporary world. He uses two metaphoric pictures of ‘throne’ and ‘chair’ to argue for how theology might ‘descend’ in the world to a relevant task of speaking of ‘God for Christ’s sake’. He offers for theology (formerly ‘queen of sciences’) a ‘seat’ in a roomful of ‘chairs’ occupied by the many contemporary ‘voices’ of plurality. He does not here surrender the message of the gospel to a new syncretic equivalency. He proposes as does Moltmann a fresh reflection of how we might see and know theology as kairologically present among the many ‘voices’ in the challenges of modernity (such as its continuing violence). This kairological element makes the task of theology ‘uncompletable’ and ever transforming in its communication of the message of the Christ-event to its world. It must speak in and listen to its ‘moment’. It must speak in and to its vita christiana (the Christian life). In each vita christiana, theology must always relate to time and context as a witness to the salvation in Christ’s death and resurrection. Theologians, therefore, must learn to detect the sufferings, illnesses, challenges, and dilemmas of their kairos moment. Put differently, with Christ they take up ‘their cross’ in a tensioned struggle through the exuberant abundance of the Spirit of Christ to face the other/s.

The exploration now turns to aspects of an ‘ecclesiological humility’. We might see here the connection in a vita christiana that takes up not only a personal humility and personal public witness but also an

ecclesiological humility inseparable from its public-prophetic concern. Moltmann also affirms that our public theology and evangelism “...must be related to the sicknesses of the given society in a healing way.” He asks, “What form is the vita christiana going to assume in this transitional phase? For what sicknesses of our time will the Christian life prove to be healing?”

This ‘facing the other/s’ in a humble and healing way by theologians opens this study’s next section of an examination of ecclesiological humility that enters the darkness of the word of the cross.

2/2/6—Seeing and Knowing through Ecclesiological Humility

For what follows on how we see and know our place as believers in the plural community we must take further references from Jesus’s humility. Jesus reveals to us the paradoxically dual aspect of the courage to face his persecutors, and his humility in obedient surrender to the Father; as the letter to the Philippians tells us,

Precisely because [or, although] he was in the form of God, … he poured himself out by taking the form of a slave, by being born in the likeness of human beings, and by being recognized as a human. He humbled himself, by becoming obedient even to the point of accepting death, [even death on a cross] …

How does the idea of Jesus—the Son of God, inform how we see and know our place among the other/s? In Jesus Christ alone is the tension between self-love and love of the other/s reconciled and maintainable to the eschaton as hope in the exuberant abundance of life over death. Our explorations here take this question into ecclesiology through a theological view of the church and asks: is our view of the work of the Spirit of Christ as the titles of Jesus limited only to the work of the Christian church’s mission? Or is it as Moltmann argues, “that the mission of Christ creates its own church”? Moltmann brings into view here a broader and more open understanding of how we see and know not only the other/s, unknown, persons presently outside our ecclesiological view but also ourselves involved in the mission of Christ. The search here is, through Moltmann, for an understanding of how this mission encompasses a broader church-cosmos relation. Moltmann’s argument above does not stand for the idea that the church has no place. Instead, he argues that the point of the mission of Christ as the missio Dei is

---

243 As Fensham writes, “…a resolute posture of repentance and humility and a prophetic voice that challenges the church itself as well as the world beyond, can never be separated” – see “The Conversation between Public Theology and Missiology: A Response to Sebastian Kim,” Missiology: An International Review, 45/4 (2017), 403.
244 Moltmann, Spirit, 171.
245 Moltmann, Spirit, 171.
247 Moltmann, The Church in the Power of the Spirit: A Contribution to Messianic Ecclesiology, trans. by Margaret Kohl (London, UK: SCM Press, 1977). 10. For Moltmann’s cosmic christology, see chapter four’s first paragraphs and notes. All mention of ‘church’ references a theological and cosmic view of the church unless said otherwise, such as when referring to the institutional ‘church’ as a sociological reality. A detailed exploration of a theology of the church, though necessary, is beyond the purview of this study.
not to “spread the church, but to spread the kingdom.” Regarding contemporary Catholic and Protestant missionary theology, he adds, “The missionary concept of the church leads to a church that is open to the world in the divine mission, because it leads to a trinitarian interpretation of the church in the history of God’s dealings with the world.” As a result, we might see and know a place in God’s church that has at the same time theological and ‘secular parables’ (to use Barth’s term). We might see with Moltmann such a ‘broad’ (or ‘two-mode’) view of ‘church’ as made up of a manifest church of believers and latent church of the poor who wait for Christ’s return.

The priority in the *missio Dei* of the kingdom over the church might seem to suggest a ‘lesser’ (in the sense of its humility as ‘servant’ among, and with others) role for the church which the scriptural witness shows ‘is the body of Christ’. Here too, a tension surfaces that may inform a different response in an ecclesiological aspect of the self-other paradox framed here as *church-cosmos*. Moltmann articulates this broader relation in his break from aspects of the Heidelberg Catechism that he thought were questionable. His understanding of the universal activity of God’s Son thus shapes his idea of the church as follows, “Ultimately, the election, gathering and preservation of the church are not an end in themselves but serve ‘eternal life’, as the final goal of Christ’s activity, and of the church created out of that activity, is called.”

To reiterate, the tension here is in the *church-cosmos* relation. Jesus Christ shows the resolution of the church-cosmos relation in the saying of the historical Jesus, “I did not come to be served but to serve, and to give my life as a ransom for many.” Does the ‘many’ imply a condition or a limit to the reach of Christ’s unfathomable love? How does Christ, then, as ‘head’ of the church—as ‘head’ of the ‘body of Christ’—reveal the testimony of the crucified Jesus who died not just for the church but for ‘all’? If Christ died for ‘all’, does that change our seeing and knowing of the other/s (humanity and creation)? If so, then how so? What does the scriptural witness reveal when it says (my emphasis), “…a person, Christ Jesus, who gave himself as a ransom for all, the witness at the proper time.”

Moltmann roots his understanding of universalism in the “word of the cross” which following Blumhardt he understands as ‘the true Christian universalism’. The scope of the divine love that comes

---

248 Moltmann, *Church*, 11. See Bauckham’s critique of this specific emphasis in *Theology*, 147.
249 Moltmann, *Church*, 11.
251 Both Moltmann and Barth raise objections to the similar article on the church (VII) in the Augsburg Confession – see *Church*, 69-71, n5:371. See Bauckham’s critique of this specific emphasis in *Theology*, 147.
252 Matthew 20:28 ESV.
253 1 Timothy 2:5b-6. William D. Mounce, whose translation I have used here, makes the point that Paul’s reference to Jesus’s ransom as ὑπὲρ πᾶνταν, “for all,” shows his desire that the Ephesian church “pray for the salvation of all people… [and that to do so] …is in line with the purpose of Christ’s death” – *Pastoral Epistles*, WBC 46; Accordance electronic ed. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2000), 75, 87. However also, the use of ὑπὲρ πᾶνταν speaks to the idea of the ‘beyond,’ ‘the more’, and ‘the whole’ which connects to 1 Corinthians 8:6b’s ‘all things’ [ὑπὲρ πᾶνταν] “through whom are all things and through whom we live” [NET]. The ‘all’, or ‘the whole’ that Christ here redeems is all of humanity and creation. Other references also might emphasize the same approach, such as Titus 2:11; 2 Corinthians 1:20; Romans 11:32; Acts 2:39, and Luke 20:38.
254 1 Timothy 2:5b-6. Translation by Mounce, *Pastoral*, 75.
255 See *Crucified*, 194-195, and the footnotes of section 2/1/5.
through ‘the word of the cross’ then is at the same time more than what we know as the ‘Christian’ expression of Christ’s body, and yet never ‘less’ than Christ’s body. In other words, Christ as head of the ‘church’ is much more than the church (that we know as ‘Christian church’). The church although it points to Christ through new birth and lives in the creative energies of God’s love for the other/s is not ‘the Christ’. Rather, Christ is the Christian church’s determining subject. More so, any relationship with the triune God cannot be anything but simultaneously trinitarian and ecclesial since it is through the Spirit that believers are ‘baptized into Christ’s body’. In this sense, as Volf writes, “…then the church must speak of the Trinity as its determining subject… [so that also] the relations between the many in the church must reflect the mutual love of the divine persons.”

We might also say that this trinitarian understanding of church shows the idea and experience of the church ‘as part’ of all that the Spirit of Christ does in the world. The church thus takes its place in the kingdom of God; in humility; in incompleteness; in the ongoing tension of known and unknowns, and in tensional openness and tenderness to all. The church takes its place with all of whom the Spirit of Christ is working to liberate into God’s love and freedom.

Moltmann observes that theology engages the movement of history from past to future as a “…unbroken, still incomplete, and uncompletable dialogue in history.” Theology’s link to history’s transience tells us that it ought to stay open to all knowledge. It ought to make room for creative imagination in its task of interpreting in the present God’s love for the world of its ‘today/s’. A theology that we see and know in this way (and by implication, in its context, the church: “…in what fellowship did these contributions to theology develop…” accepts its lack of ‘finality’ which seems more than a concession. According to Moltmann such a theology even makes ‘constitutive’ its openness to difference and diversity of interpretation. If we see and know a theology of the cross that opens out through the resurrection to an exuberant-abundant eschatological hope for the future, then as Moltmann also prompts, we must interpret the relevance of the in-between scriptural witness and traditions for their message in our ‘kairos’ moment/s. In this sense then, we see and know ‘theology’ or ‘tradition’ not as “treasury of dead truths” but in their continuing contribution to the ‘direction of our shared future’, and in the continuing openness to the other/s in context. Moltmann writes,

...theological fellowship always reaches beyond our own present denominational, cultural and political limitations too. As the present contribution hopes to show, today Christian theology has to be developed in ecumenical fellowship. We can no longer limit ourselves merely to discussions with our own tradition without being quite simply ‘limited’. As far as is humanly possible, we must take account of the other Christian traditions, and offer our own tradition as a contribution to the wider ecumenical community. Then, as I have said, we recognize our own whole to be part of a greater whole, and by

---

256 See Volf, After, 191-220.
257 Volf, After, 195 (his emphasis). See also 2/2/3, note 215.
258 Moltmann, Trinity, xiii.
259 Moltmann, Trinity, xiii.
260 ‘Kairos’ refers throughout this study to a theological concept that expresses the idea of the fullness of time.
261 Moltmann, Trinity, xiv.
recognizing our own limits we can step beyond them. Then we begin to get the better of self-centred, particularist ways of thinking.262

However, the cross stays front and center of how we might, in our theology and ecclesiology, understand the Trinity’s love for and saving of all humanity and creation. This constitutive openness serves to steer not only all theology and ecclesiology to an epistemic humility but all theological and theoretical interpreters to recognizing their own limits. It is thus by admitting our limits that we can be ‘present’ in our seeing and knowing of the other/s in context. As Moltmann suggests, it is in this admission that “we can step beyond … [because] no theologian has this dimension of being ‘present’ under control. No one can produce it … every theologian can seek it and be open to the right time.”263

We might say thus that Christ eschatologically interrupts our comprehension as communities of faith and opens for us, and before us, a possibility in our ecclesiological responses to the other/s in the contemporary world.

We now turn to the next section’s deepening of the idea and experience of a tensioned struggle as seen and known through a suspension of dichotomy.

2/2/7—Seeing and Knowing through Suspending Dichotomy

Jesus Christ’s incarnation, death, and resurrection, overcomes the paradox that William Lane the New Testament commentator describes as the ‘transcendent Son ordained to suffer death.’264 We might say that Christ ‘suspends the dichotomy’ (a tensioned-creative act of the imagination which we might also understand socio-psychologically) between the earthly and the eternal, the temporal and the eschatological, the particular and the universal, the knowns and unknowns, and self-love and the love of the other/s. This tensioned-creative act continues an aspect of the creative energies of Moltmann’s analogia relationis. It also sets up the next developments in chapter three (3/3) of the ideas of a suspension of dichotomies for an exuberant-abundant hope in the other/s.

In a sociological sense, we may also describe this suspension of dichotomy seen in Jesus in the garden of Gethsemane as a ‘possibility of doubt’ in the sense that Jesus takes up in himself his ‘doubt’ (“My Father, if possible, let this cup pass from me! Yet not what I will, but what you will” – Matthew 26:39b NET). Jesus allows his ‘doubt’ to remain a ‘tension of consciousness’ (to use Schütz and Luckmann’s term).265 That is to say, again in a sociological sense, that Jesus does not privilege or presuppose his form and his position. He humbles himself and takes on the form of a servant in his humanity. As the Book of

---

262 Moltmann, Trinity, xiv (his emphasis).
264 Lane, Hebrews 1–8, WBC, 47A; Accordance/Thomas Nelson electronic ed. (Dallas, TX: Word Books, 1991), 121.
265 See the first paragraphs and notes of this chapter.
Hebrews states, ‘Although he was a son, he learned obedience from what he suffered.’

He holds his own faith, hope, and love, in a paradoxical tensioned struggle between life and death on the cross. The biblical scholar William Lane writes that in overcoming this paradox,

[Jesus] does not cling to the privileged status that his unique sonship implies but receives it from the Father only after he has suffered the humiliation of death on the cross. Jesus learned experientially what obedience entails through his passion in order to achieve salvation and to become fully qualified for his office as eternal high priest.

The tensioned struggle to which Jesus holds himself perfects him. He fulfills his tasks of love in condescension and descent from his ‘right’ (as one in the ‘form of God’). He did not grasp anything for himself so that we, the objects of his love, might look to the “founder and perfecter of our faith” and see and know him as one who “…for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of God.”

He embraced the weakness of human form and endured it with patience to death on our behalf. We see and know through this that, “He can deal gently with the ignorant and wayward, since he himself is beset with weakness.”

Might we see and know our situations anew in this way through the Spirit whom God has given to be with the creation? If the promise is real of the possibility that Christ has made available to all, can this possibility include a view of the abyss we must each face in ourselves and the persecution and martyrdom that loving the other/s might entail? If the darkness of the crucified Christ is love revealed at its quintessential and unfathomable depth, does it also stand true that even in the violent or broken conditions of life as we may know it, we cannot extinguish such a love? Here, both the suffering and joy of the trinitarian God in the Christ-event affirms for the human that the fragrance of love for the other/s comes through the acceptance of the tensioned struggle of surrender in suffering for the other/s. Jesus suspends the dichotomy between self and other, human and divine, to take up this decisive tensioned struggle of surrender in his relationship with the Father through the Spirit. The unity of the Trinity as seen and known

---

266 Hebrews 5:8. Translation by William L. Lane, Hebrews 1–8 (WBC 47A; Accordance electronic ed. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1991), 107. Lane points out the manifestation in Jesus of his messianic christology connected to the humility and function of the Levitical priesthood (see reference to Psalm 110:4 in Hebrews 5:5-6). He also notes that Jesus was under no obligation to offer himself for sin. Nor was he ‘kept’ from the experience of death (Ibid, 120). Though sinless and beyond the obligations of the Levitical priesthood Jesus humbled himself to ‘participate fully in the human condition’ (see Ibid, 119). The words ‘he learned obedience for what he suffered’ (ἐμαθεν ἅγιον ὄν ἐπαθεν) reference both his death (ἐπαθεν) and that he ‘learned’ in his reception of the will of God (ἐμαθεν) – see Ibid, 121.

267 William L. Lane’s commentary on Hebrews 5:9 – see Hebrews 1–8, 121. See also Hebrews 12:2, 2:10, and 5:9-10. Lane shows the concept “suffer” in Hebrews (the verb πάθεων normally used to mean “to suffer”) to refer “only of the passion of Jesus and takes on the nuance of ‘to die’ (2:9, 10)” (Ibid, 121). The term, in verse 8, ἐπαθεν, thus translates as ‘he suffered (death)’. Lane also explains the word ἐμαθεν, “he learned,” as carrying “a nuance developed in biblical Greek, where learning takes place in the reception of Scripture as the word of God” (Ibid, 121). The clause καὶ τελειωθείης, “and once made perfect” references God’s validation of Jesus’s obedience and speaks to the suffering that brought this about (see Ibid, 122). Lane also points out that there also seems not to be in Jesus’s “fervent cries and tears to God” (v7) a direct reference to the ‘Synoptic tradition of Gethsemane’ and with the ‘agony at Golgotha’ – Ibid, 120.

268 Hebrews 12:2 ESV.
269 Hebrews 5:2 ESV.
in this event involves thus as writes Moltmann, “the Father and Son... most deeply separated in forsakenness, and at the same time... most inwardly one in their surrender.”270

In the contours of our humanity, we see and know here the wooing of divine love toward taking up this **tensioned struggle of love** as a way of seeing and knowing the other/s. It tells us that we cannot live life by ‘taking sides’ (through dichotomizing dualities)—such as by choosing either the ‘resurrection and life’ elements of the event or the ‘surrender and death’ of the event. The first—*of life*—must take its ongoing reference from the surrender and death that brought it forth, and the second—*of death*—must take its ongoing reference in the resurrection and life that alone can explain it. A response also surfaces here of the way this informs how we can see and know the other/s. The “Maranatha” cry in this sense is one that expresses in its ‘exuberant abundance in tension’ both joy of expectation and an eschatological tension of suffering in the meantime.

### 2/3—Assessments

This chapter has explored the idea so far that Christ in his death and resurrection can minister to the tension of both joy and suffering embodied within the new-creational life of the Spirit. Thus also, that Christ alone can reconcile the tensioned struggle between certainty and doubt; truth and grace; honesty and tenderness, and justice and forgiveness. These tensions all play out in the creation through the self-other relation which God enables in the movement from God’s self-limitation to his eschatological delimitation in respect of his creation. God has revealed and made possible a self-other relation for humanity and creation as *new-creational life* in the Spirit. *If* it is the cosmic Spirit as the Spirit of God who does this work of *differentiating* and *binding together* in the human-divine relation, then the universe in which it works cannot be a ‘closed system’. Instead, as Moltmann contends, we can see it and know it as a “system that is open—open for God and for his future.”271

I have argued that the ‘word of the cross’ made possible by the resurrection opens human eyes and hearts to hope in and a love for the other/s. This study’s next chapters will take up this journey to a ‘hope in’ and a ‘doing with and for’ the other/s that the Christ-event makes possible. The gift of *hope* and the *doing of love* according to the Christ-event bring us thus face to face (as whole person/s to whole person/s) with the other/s in humanity, and face to face with the creation. These ‘others’ are unknown, foreign, the poor, the enemy, and all creation. They are *the faces* Christ brings into our seeing and knowing, as those imprisoned ones, thirsty ones, strangers and sick recorded in Matthew 25:34-40. The Christ-event shows us through the exuberant-abundant life in its tensioned struggle with surrender and death where we may find in the present the divine hope and love for the other/s. It opens a *prophetic vision of the past* to mobilize it out of a ‘static’ (anti-historical) state, and a *prophetic vision of the future* that joins together,

---


as Berdyaev argues, “the present and the past into a sort of interior and complete spiritual movement” making human destiny both a celestial and terrestrial reality.\textsuperscript{272} We might also say with Berdyaev in this sense a prophetic seeing and knowing of human destiny involves both a human and divine drama. He sees here a higher level of consciousness whereby the human grasps “the truth that belief in God presupposes belief in man, and belief in man postulates belief in God.”\textsuperscript{273}

Without a ‘tensioned-prophetic’ (past-present-future) seeing and knowing through the Christ-event in its tensioned struggle of love, we can only take up a one-sided position on either the side of the resurrection or the side of the cross. On the side of the resurrection, we may take hold of the positives, knowns, certainties, and faith that come short of understanding their limits. On the side of the cross, we may take hold of the negatives, doubts, suspicions, and critiques that may come short of a faith-understanding of the possibilities in Other, others/s, and unknowns. Instead, in the Christ-event we see an alternative tensioned joining of the two as it were in the embrace of the struggle between the dualities of past and future, faith and doubt, of self and other, of known and unknown, and of the divine and the human.

We might understand here that Christ announces a way that transcends the binaries—one that takes up their ‘binding together’ in ‘difference’. Put differently, in the Christ-event the suspension of dichotomies allows an exploration between opposites in the search for an ongoing tensional connection or ‘unity-across-difference’. The Christ-event thus also opens for us the further searches for a prophetic ‘tensioned hope’ in the next chapter.

Christ’s suspension of dichotomies on the cross has suggested a response to a new way of seeing and knowing the other/s (or the different). This new way sees the other/s as worthy of engagement. Christ’s cross in this sense places how we see and know the other/s as the decisive point that determines and shapes humanity and creation’s shared future. Christ’s way of seeing and knowing the other/s places the ‘Other’ and ‘the other/s’ front and center and makes this view of the other/s a fundamental aspect of what it means to be human.

I have not tried here to find something on which to pin an already determined theory but to take up this tensioned exuberant-abundant view of God’s love as a new way to see and know the other/s in our contexts. Moltmann’s trinitarian christology has also engaged this understanding of the Christ-event as one that suspends the dichotomies and dualities of more traditional conceptions.\textsuperscript{274} He embraces the idea and

\textsuperscript{272} Berdyaev, History, 41. Berdyaev, in his metaphysics of history, unites the creative future (via the ‘human urge towards self-fulfillment’) and the conservative past (the spiritual past as an inner tradition – ‘conservative’ here does not refer to an anti-historical abstract or ‘pure conservatism’). He argues thus for a unity-across-diversity without dissolution or subsumption between the human and divine. He transcends the cleavage and antithesis, or ‘dichotomies’ invigorated by Cartesian philosophy. He also sees no opposition between the human’s spiritual world and the historical world. I am also setting up here a language of transition through a non-conflictive seeing and knowing of the tensioned relation via the idea of ‘double meaning’ which the Christ-event shows.


experience of an open, ongoing deepening process of discerning the tensioned struggle as a fundamental element of how we may see and know theology in the modern context.

The journey now continues in next chapter’s explorations of the aspects of a social trinitarian theology through the Christ-event that may inform a hope for and in and with the other/s for the sake of peace in the world.
CHAPTER 3—Hoping

In chapter two, I engaged a focused exploration on humility in our seeing and knowing. Here, I want to show the explicit and implicit connection between the humility in the gospel story (as a learnable attribute) and the emergence of hope in or with the other/s. I take up this ‘hope in or with the other/s’ here through the example of the child and in its juxtapositioning to an ‘Aristotelian principle of Likeness’. We return thus again to the account of Matthew 18:1-5,

Then the disciples came to Jesus, saying: ‘Who indeed is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?’ And calling to him a little child, whom he placed in their midst, he said: ‘Truly I say to you: Unless you revise your ways and become like little children, you absolutely will not enter into the kingdom of heaven. Therefore, whoever will humble himself or herself as this little child is humble, this person is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. And whoever receives one such little child in my name receives me’.275

Jesus’s placing the child amid the disciples is in a profound sense a fundamental aspect of the explorations here of the element of hope in or with the other/s. Jesus calls the disciples to a surrendered humility that contrasts with the disciples’ ‘interest in greatness and power’ (to use Hagner’s term276). What this scriptural event does is lend support to a search for responses of peace through the example of the humility of a trusting spirit in the contexts of power and competition and competitiveness in theology and science. So, in some way Jesus is pulling out the child as a kind of object lesson (for learning hope in or with the other/s) as he makes the child into a sermon on humility. This aspect of humility stays a biblical contextual theme throughout this study and invites learning a new humility in us about the mission of God’s Spirit with ‘the other/s’ (God, neighbor, enemy, creation).277

275 In the explorations of chapter two (2/1/1), I searched for the idea of the child as the ‘humility of a trusting spirit’. Several commentaries, such as Hagner’s, associate the idea of the ‘little child’ to the ‘disciples’ (i.e., see Hagner, Matthew 14–28, 514, and for the translation of Matthew 18:1-5 above, Ibid, 515). With Donahue, I take up, in these verses, a nuanced interpretation of the ‘child’ (see J. R. Donahue’s, “The ‘Parable’ of the Sheep and the Goats: A Challenge to Christian Ethics,” Theological Studies 47 (1985), 3-31). He seems to connect the ‘little child’ of Matthew 18:4 to ‘the least of these my brothers or sisters’ of Matthew 25:40 which I take to signal the ‘least’ as either ‘disciples’ or ‘poor’. He writes that neither view absolves us “from care for the poor and needy of the world… there are other significant parts of the NT which summon Christians to concern for the poor and needy” (Ibid, 28-29). However, Donahue asks the question: “Whatever happened to justification by grace through faith or the word of the cross?” (Ibid, 8). To which we might say that Moltmann does not lose sight of the aspect of ‘justification by grace through faith’ or in the ‘word of the cross’. In Moltmann’s more dynamic and broad view of ‘the least’ as the poor, victim, abused, and silenced, he does not surrender the difference between those who believe in Jesus Christ and those who do not (see Experiences in, 267. Also, chapter two [2/2/6] and chapter four [4/2/1]). For him, Paul’s ‘word of the cross’ (see 1 Corinthians 1:18, and chapter two [2/2/4]) stands for both the proclamation of the good news of Jesus Christ and for the example of a life lived in acts of mercy and charity to all. He takes up with Blumhardt a forward-looking or eschatological hope in God’s consummation of his plans at the eschaton for ‘all things’ ‘for all’, and what this means in the now for the church which lives in a plural contemporary world – see History, 120-122.

276 See chapter two, note 95.

277 See Keum, Together, 9-10.
In Chapter two’s (2/1/5) explorations I argued through Bonhoeffer for learnability via the hope that ‘only a suffering God can help.’ This ‘hope’ enabled Bonhoeffer to enter his abyss ‘released from anxiety’. 278 He and Moltmann thus connect the idea of ‘learning’ (ἐμαθέν) (as a ‘hope’) that can rise from the ground of suffering (ἐπαθέν) as the ground of the cross that has become known through new-creational life in the resurrection.279

We might thus see the cross-resurrection event allowing the relationship in an exuberant-abundant tensioned struggle of such paradoxical ideas as ‘suffering’ (ἐπαθέν) and ‘to learn’ (as hope) (ἐμαθέν).280

The aspect of hope through learnability also speaks to the person’s ‘becoming’ through the ongoing experience of a growing faith, hope and love in God for the other/s. We may, in this sense, understand the man who when Jesus healed his daughter, cried out, “I believe; help my unbelief.”281 The ‘hope’ here is in a daily fresh ‘becoming’ that is a continual conversion and a continual ongoing daily new start of newly learned hope in the new?282 This ‘new becoming’ also references Jesus’s use of the child to help the disciples to re-discover God’s heart and will for the other/s as a hope in the other/s.

Paul argues similarly in Romans 12:2 (“Do not be conformed to this world but be transformed by the renewal of your mind…” ESV). ‘Transformation’ and ‘renewing’ here references the Spirit of Christ who is present and who keeps coming. The ‘new’ is in an ongoing newness through Christ as newness of hope in the other/s. This hope in God as Other and implicitly thus in the other/s is what brings into view a context for the new-creational life lived until all see the fulfillment of hope in God in the ‘face to face’ (whole person/s to whole person/s) of the eschaton. ‘New’ is an ongoing renewing—as stated in the Letter

---

278 Moltmann, Experiences of, 43.
279 Moltmann’s statements in Experiences of, 41, link the aspect of ‘learnability’ to both Kierkegaard and Bloch (He writes that both Kierkegaard and Ernst Bloch agree on one thing: “that anxiety and hope can both be learnt…”). Moltmann’s later emendations of this idea (in, Jesus Christ for Today’s World, trans. by Margaret Kohl (London, UK: SCM Press Ltd., 1994), 52-53) may point to a possible later shift toward seeing a more positive connection between hope and despair in both Bloch and Kierkegaard.

280 See the exploration in chapter two (2/1/5). According to Moltmann’s understanding, these two attributes (suffering [anxiety], and ‘to learn’ [as hope]) do not stand in contrast to one another but complement each other in an ongoing tensional relation (see Moltmann, Experiences of, 40-41; Jesus, 52-53; Way, 214-215). Both attributes ‘anticipate the future’ in different but inseparable ways. He argues that without anxiety ‘we would be blind, ruthless, and careless’, and without being able to ‘learn’ (or ‘learnability’) there can be no hope in or with the other/s. Anxiety helps us to notice danger, etc. As anxiety expects danger, being able to ‘learn’ opens to hope which expects deliverance. Both attributes help us to develop wisdom and discernment in the present for the future. Though our focus turns here to an analysis of hope in the other/s this does not suggest that we can view hope (as the ability to ‘learn’) without also trying to understand its counterpart of despair (or anxiety) in the cross of Christ. This present analysis on hope will thus implicitly continue to search for how it might inform a reverence (or ‘fear’) of God (for a discussion of the relationship between hope and fear, see Moltmann, Experiences of, 39-54; Jesus, 51-55). Hope in this sense becomes as Moltmann argues, ‘an Exodus story’ or a journey through the Spirit of becoming like God (Experiences of, 42). John’s first letter states likewise [my added comments]: “Beloved, now we are God’s children; and what we shall become has not yet been disclosed. We only know that when he appears we shall be like him, because we shall see him as he really is. And everyone who has this hope in him keeps himself [or, herself] pure, just as he [or she] is pure.” Translation of 1 John 3:2-3 by Stephen S. Smalley, 1, 2, 3 John, 138. In his commentary of this passage, Smalley argues for what may be John’s inclusive though unconscious resistance to the gnostic delineation between an ‘initiated elite’ and the rest of the world. Importantly also, according to Smalley, the passage shows this ‘final appearing’ of Jesus ‘as part of an ongoing manifestation of God’s Word’ (Ibid, 143-144).

281 Mark 9:24 NET.
282 Moltmann, Way, 102.
to the Colossians, “[you] have been clothed with the new man that is being renewed in knowledge according to the image of the one who created it.”283 Paul’s letter to Titus states similarly, “…he saved us not by works of righteousness that we have done but on the basis of his mercy, through the washing of the new birth and the renewing of the Holy Spirit.”284 Hope thus implies not only the grace in which we stand by faith in Christ but also the empathy of grace extended to the other/s in a daily becoming through the Spirit.

The link here is between Moltmann’s ‘empathy’ and hope in and with the other/s which also speaks directly to this study’s prior explorations of our seeing and knowing of God’s fathomless love in and through the cross-resurrection event. Moltmann brings us thus back to the example of the ‘child’ in Matthew 18:5285, and to the ‘least’ in Matthew 25:40286 which he also identifies with the people, or crowd, or poor, or sick, or as the ochlos.287 He is appealing to an understanding and application of a new set of presuppositions as a backdrop for a different way of hoping in the other/s in theology. His appeal has the feel of George Eliot’s “roar which lies on the other side of silence.”288 His taking up of the poor, child/children, crowd, and people brings into view a gospel of hope as meant to be in service of God’s love for the entire world. He takes up a theology of hope in and with the other/s that cannot remain private or only ‘personal’. Theology here takes its place in the public space—in the res publica—as a participant in hope; a prophet who ‘interferes;’ the friend to the broken and the poor, and helper to the orphans and widows. He writes,

Those who hope for God’s kingdom will contradict the contradictions of the modern world and will welcome those points in which it corresponds to the kingdom. They will work critically and prophetically on the reform of the modern world.289

In other words, the life of God in the hope of the resurrection works through the tension of ‘picking up our cross’. Moltmann continues here the idea that the Christ-event presents to humanity and creation the action of the triune God in the radical ‘tension’ of the cross-resurrection event. In this single event of two dimensions we have a ‘pause’ and a ‘radical antithesis’ ("it is a full stop and a pause")—the resurrection surmounts death as a hope in or with the other/s in exuberant abundance of God’s new-creational life over death revealed through the radical tension in the event.291

283 Colossians 3:10 NET.
284 Titus 3:5 NET.
285 Moltmann, Experiences in, 267.
286 Moltmann, Way, 99-100.
287 Moltmann also seems to take up, with christological qualifications, elements of Byung-Mu Ahn’s ‘ochlos’ (or people, crowd) – see Experiences in, 258-264. See also chapter four (4/2/1).
288 George Eliot, Middlemarch: A Study of Provincial Life (London, UK: William Blackwood and Sons, 1871). Mary Anne Evans shows here another layer to knowing through otherness which implies a new hoping in the other/s.
289 Moltmann, God for, 220.
290 Moltmann, Way, 214.
291 See Moltmann, The Theology, 227. Moltmann takes up here an understanding of the Pauline ‘word of the cross’ (i.e., Romans 1:18; 1 Corinthians 1:17) which he grounds as ‘an act of God in the category of divine history’ and against the idea of an ‘exclusively existential understanding’ of the Christ-event according to Bultmann (and also to some extent according to Ricoeur) – see Crucified, 62; Way, 232f. Compare also the discussion in Crucified, 61-75,
Moltmann opens theology to a hoping as it were in the other/s on the ‘other side’, and in the other/s yet unknown. He gives voice to those silenced by theology and theory and thus brings hope in and with the other/s to the forefront of our thinking. This turn in hope to the other/s, as Moltmann argues, has none to do with ‘forgetting or suppressing’ but poses as he does, the question: “In the face of our past, how can we shape the future with this hope?”

He deepens a view of theology as the hope that we can find in humanity and creation through the tensioned struggle between the ‘comfort of correspondence and conflict of contradiction’ in the Christ-event.

The cross-resurrection event is thus according to Moltmann the answer of hope to the divine rhetorical question to Cain: “Where is your brother Abel?”. This answer of hope brings us back to the ‘object lesson’ Jesus gives in the example of the child’s humility and contrast to the disciple’s ‘interest in greatness and power’. This chapter takes up this lesson from the child as a way that we may hope in or with the other/s in the contemporary world.

**Schematics of the Chapter in Context**

Matthew 18:1-5’s ‘object lesson in humility’ and the subject of how we may hope in or with the other/s invite an interanimative exploration in this chapter that includes Shellie H. Levine’s psychology of children’s cognition; Moltmann’s social trinitarian theology, and Ricoeur’s hermeneutical philosophy. This ‘object lesson in humility’ also opens this chapter’s juxtaposing of the presence and analogy of the ‘child’ to the ‘Aristotelian principle of Likeness’. The life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Son of God and Son of man also continue to speak to this chapter’s exploration on hope through a search for the contours of a surrendered humility in humanity and creation. Christ's life, death, and resurrection, in its contrast to life lived for the ‘self’, helps our explorations here of an Aristotelian epistemology of ‘like begets like’.

This chapter’s interanimative explorations also continue prior analyses of two main ideas: a ‘suspension of dichotomy,’ and the idea and experience of ‘a tensioned exuberant abundance of life over death seen in the cross-resurrection event’. What the study’s other explorations have shown so far of these two attributes points to their significance for my focus here on hope in or with the other/s.

Levine has a phenomenological approach; Moltmann and Ricoeur do not; which presents this chapter’s explorations with the problem of engaging a conversation between these three authors. My challenge here is to figure out how a phenomenological argument about child psychology and the observation of the child

---


293 See also section 3/4 below.

can enrich the understanding of the human condition, and how that may help cast light on Moltmann’s conception of childlikeness. Moltmann does not himself take up the child as a major theme, but he does write about the child. Ricoeur says virtually nothing about the child. Levine does a great deal of it because it is the whole focus of her work. However, if we were to take the attribute of childlikeness as an essential feature of Jesus’s ministry as something that can enlighten this aspect of my argument, then an exploration with Levine may help to provide responses of hope in or with the other/s for the sake of a world of peace. To then take the aspect of hope further with Ricoeur’s hermeneutical philosophy and his analysis of evil, may provide a framework for a concluding exploration with Moltmann’s critique of the Aristotelian principle of Likeness (an antithesis to childlike humility for hope in or with the other/s).295

Levine’s approach to children’s creativity in lived experience as isomorphic (the same, or ‘equal’ in ‘form’) to adult spirituality has potential to inform theology explained by Moltmann as a way of hoping in the other/s. Similarly, though without any reference to children, Ricoeur’s take on ‘surplus of meaning’ opens to the idea and experience of hope in ‘other’ he describes as a ‘logic of superabundance’ seen through the resurrection.296 All three writers engage a shared critique of a dominant Western narrative. These critiques are a resource and challenge to the Aristotelian Principle of Likeness and its influence on modern forms of sophistication.

I engage here a descriptive-comparative exploration of Levine’s approach to the child’s creativity in lived experience and Ricoeur’s ‘logic of superabundant hope in the other/s as overflow’ of the resurrection. I also ask how they might reflect (complement or contradict) Moltmann’s social trinitarian theology of hope in ‘other’. As this exploration unfolds, I intend to draw on Levine’s research on childlike spirituality without losing sight of the model of Christlikeness the gospel embodies in the life, ministry, and death of Jesus.

I engage this exploration by focusing on three of their writings: 1) Levine’s article “Children’s Cognition as the Foundation of Spirituality,”297 2) Ricoeur’s The Conflict of Interpretations: Essays in Hermeneutics, and 3) Moltmann’s God for a Secular Society: The Public Relevance of Theology.

All three texts, published in the latter part of the 20th Century, speak to a shared critique of a dominant Western narrative that has universalized and naturalized growth as gradual development toward sophistication or perfection. They speak to the question whether their respective fields may inform how

295 Moltmann does not ‘exclude’ the Aristotelian principle of Likeness in his theology but argues that its one-sided emphasis on correspondence (and endorsement of ‘self’ and ‘like’) is incomplete without its tensioned relation with the contradiction of a turn to the other/s. See God for, 136-152.

296 Ricoeur explains ‘surplus of meaning’ as an “autonomous systemized” logical surplus already put in motion, which he engages to explain the ‘human capability’ and ‘passion for the possible’ (Kierkegaard) already at work through both kerygmatic and philosophical hope – see Conflict, 298-300.

297 The focus on children’s cognition in the phenomenology of spirituality in this exploration with Levine accesses only one aspect of her psychology as abbreviated here to a ‘psychology of children’s cognition’. We might also describe her ‘psychology of children’s cognition’ as ‘children’s cognition psychology of spirituality’. Her work in the practical-aesthetical process that lays the groundwork for the importance of metaphoric logic as a form of consciousness is set out in more detail in her doctoral thesis, Consciousness as Logical Form (Burlington, VT: University of Vermont, 1983).
we might live in hope for, in, and with the other/s, and how we might learn to hope in the other/s. The following explorations describe the three authors’ respective moves away from Aristotelian-Cartesian logic to determine whether their various elements of spirituality may, with Moltmann’s social trinitarian theology, inform how we may hope in the other/s in the contemporary context.\(^\text{298}\)

I delimit the vast field of psychology here to an exploration of Levine’s critique of Aristotelian logic in Piagetian theory via her observation and analysis of metaphoric logic in children’s cognition.\(^\text{299}\) I do not try to occupy the transitional space between psychology and theology. Instead, I describe these two disciplines separately (or, in ‘parallelism’). I do so to explore the effects of hope in the other/s in both Levine’s reversal of Aristotelian-Piagetian logic in children’s cognition (for natural spirituality), and in Moltmann’s resource and challenge to the Aristotelian principle of correlation.

I find the transitional space between Moltmann’s theology of hope in the other/s and Ricoeur’s philosophy easier to navigate due to the shared eschatological elements reflected in their selected writings. Their mutual acceptance of each other’s influence allows for a taking up in section 3/2 of a conversation between Ricoeur and Moltmann, which I then develop further in section 3/3. However, it is important to note that Ricoeur distinguishes between theology and philosophy. He situates his philosophical approach in the ‘work of thought’ that starts with listening, but which is “…yet within the autonomy of responsible thought.”\(^\text{300}\) I access his kerygmatic thoughts here without lessening the importance of his philosophy’s contribution to the ideas of ‘surplus’ and a philosophy of ‘other’.

The chapter begins with an exploration of Levine’s psychology (3/1) and then of Ricoeur’s philosophy in conversation with Moltmann (3/2). Moltmann’s theology of hope in and with the other/s in conversation with Levine and Ricoeur then follows (3/3) and the chapter concludes with assessments (3/4).

We now turn to a detailed exploration on the hope in the other/s the child presents to us in their suspension of dichotomies as seen in Levine’s psychology of children’s cognition.

\(^{298}\) The following explorations support clarity of identity between ‘natural spirituality’ (as natural and general revelation) and ‘theological spirituality’ (as general and special revelation and a relationship with God). Though the following explorations touch on aspects of ‘revelation’, a detailed discussion of this topic is beyond the purview of this study. The moves ‘away from’ Aristotelian-Cartesian logic keep specific elements which show the tension (as with Moltmann’s theology) between correspondence and contradiction.

\(^{299}\) Levine’s ‘theory of consciousness as logical form’, although beyond the scope of this study, develops (with reference to Eliade’s psychology) the idea of ‘complementary opposites’ – see the discussions in Consciousness, 210-248.

\(^{300}\) Following Kant, Ricoeur also works as a philosopher within the limits of philosophical theory (i.e., in looking to make ‘unfathomable’ concepts clear for practical use). We might see this emphasis in Ricoeur such as in his theory of transcendental imagination, where he engages both the attribute of hope and surplus. However, ‘hope and surplus’ here for him also informs a theology of surplus in the person of Christ and in the Christ-event (see Critique, 149-151). When questioned about his focus on both philosophy and theology, he responded, “I have always walked on two legs. It is not only for methodological reasons that I do not mix genres, it is because I insist on affirming a twofold reference, which is absolutely primary for me” (Ibid, 139). For instance, for him, in the philosophical sense ‘conversion’ is of a “more perfect activation [of] whole reason” – Conflict, 403, 424.
3/1—‘Hope’, in Levine’s Psychology of Children’s Cognition

The example of the child, Jesus uses in Matthew 18:1-5, invites us to this chapter’s conversation with Levine’s psychology of children’s cognition. *Chapter two* took up from the same Scripture the aspect of *humility of a trusting spirit and a willingness to be dependent on the other’s*. I searched there for the meaning of the word ‘childlikeness’ as an example of *surrendered humility in Jesus* and examined it as a signature contour in human existence. I take up here with Levine her argument against the reduction of child cognition to a ‘negligible recognition’ of ‘trust’. She ‘adjusts’ this ‘reduction’ into the idea and experience of trust expanded to a ‘phenomenology of faith’ that unites and integrates cognition, emotion, and will.  

She draws on the idea and experience of trust seen through faith from the Old Testament’s use of the word ‘heart’ to signify “…[both] the seat of thought and reflection as well as the seat of the emotional experiences of pride and humility.” She links the suspension of dichotomy (and Aristotelian logic; socially accepted schemas, and hypothetico-deductive reasoning) to a phenomenology of faith that recognizes the tension in the Christian theology of the cross and resurrection. In other words, she helps us to develop further the ideas of ‘trust’ and ‘trusting humility’ (introduced in *chapter two*) through the child’s ability to naturally take up a ‘tension in diversity and difference’.

In Levine’s psychology, the child adopts the *tension in diversity* through a metaphorical logic. In this way, Levine also connects the suspension of dichotomy in Aristotelian logic in child cognition to the tension of the doctrine of atonement that ‘occurs through baptism’. Her interpretation singles out a phenomenological faith found beyond the mere external normative (or ‘exemplarist’) interpretations of Aristotelian logic. She writes,

> Thus, the death of Christ is not merely a moral example but a change in metaphysical relations between God and human. This ontologically significant fact is comprehended through faith which actualizes the cognitive skills outlined in this paper as diacritical of children’s cognition.

Levine’s perspectives here suggest the importance of exploring further those aspects of children’s cognition that fulfill according to her research the standards set for mature adult spirituality in expression-experience (such as their uniting of self and other). These perspectives seem essential for what they offer to the search for responses to a world of peace and justice.

---

301 Levine, “Children’s,” 133.
302 Levine, “Children’s,” 133. See also Ibid, 132 for the aspect of the trusting obedience in the humility of the child in lived experience. This ‘trusting obedience in humility’ comes implicitly into view through Levine’s use of Augustine’s definition of faith as “thinking with the giving of assent” drawn from its definition in F. L. Cross, and E. A. Livingstone, eds., The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2005), 595-596. All mentions of ‘faith’ in the sections on Levine refer to a ‘phenomenological faith’.
303 See Levine, “Children’s,” 133.
305 Levine, “Children’s,” 133. Levine also goes on to show the similar effect of trust as a triadic unity of cognition, emotion, and will in Judaism and Buddhism. See Ibid, 133-134.
Her psychology of children’s cognition examines the idea that children have the natural ability to suspend difference without ignoring the differences in alternative realities. We might say here that she shows children suspending difference without ignoring the tension in diversities. Levine’s work speaks to my search for responses in human existence that bring into view a unity-across-difference. She claims that child cognition is isomorphic to adult spirituality. Such an exploration may be informative to instances that show an unnatural subsuming of adulthood under overemphasized structures, control, and one-sided theoretical developments.

Levine uses the concept of ‘isomorphism’ to highlight the similarities between adults and children made visible through the child’s quintessential capability to debunk the limitations placed by Piagetian developmental theory on children’s cognition. In so doing, she looks to deflate the difference created by Aristotelian logic and to counteract the dismissive attitude to children’s cognition. She writes,

Theologians and philosophers of religion have largely limited their focus on children to the negligible recognition that children ‘trust’. This approach elides the cognitive component of faith and is consistent with the pervasive viewpoint that children are less capable than adults in terms of both their cognitive and practical abilities.  

Levine endeavors thus to illuminate the child’s cognitive capacities as “…quintessential conditions for the experience of the spiritual,” and as “resources that human beings of all ages may find as resources.” Children’s experience of reality also offers to postmodern Western and non-Western societies “…a more inclusive rather than exclusive consideration of spirituality which does not silence or disempower the voices of children or adults.”

We now turn to an exploration of Levine’s child cognition psychology in its fundamental aspects (3/1/1), in its differences with Aristotelian-Piagetian logic (3/1/2), and in some further assessments of her approach (3/1/3).

3/1/1—Fundamental Aspects and Motivations

In a significant move for the way one understands a hope in the other/s, Levine challenges the idea generated within a dominant Western cognitive psychology that the narrative of growth is simply an evolutionarily natural increase to perfection. She is not here merely advocating opposition to hierarchical stage theory (as do Goodman [1993], and Donaldson [1992]) but seeks a break from the Piagetian

---

306 Etymology: iso [equal, identical] and morphe [form, shape, the same in form, alike].
307 Levine, “Children’s,” 122. Levine here draws on Augustine’s description of truth in Christianity as made accessible through both faith and reason. She argues that phenomenological faith is “a specific mode of cognition, the components of which are quintessential to children’s cognition.” Children thus inform a faith that suspends, 1) the cognition organized according to Aristotelian logic; 2) the dichotomy between subjective and objective; 3) the Hypothetico-deductive reasoning, and 4) the use of socially accepted schemas (Ibid, 132). See also 3/1/1 below.
Influence of linear development itself. In a similar line as Belenky et al. Levine offers a more inclusive spirituality “...which does not silence or disempower the voices of children or adults.” She engages a “phenomenology of spirituality” that explores lived experiences. Here, she appeals (as we will also see in Moltmann) for a new way of hoping in the other/s. For Levine, this amounts to a finding of voice for the other/s beyond the silence. Her following arguments will show how an overrealized application of theoretical analysis can characterize children’s cognition as lacking in “sophistication” and can thus cause such a ‘silence’. She tries to give voice to facets of children cognition that evokes and renews a sense of hope—of passion, and wonder in psychology. We might say she attempts a retrieval of children’s creativity in lived experience and its effect on spirituality. She lines up with Hay et al. in challenging perceived limitations of the analyses of Ronald Goldman and others (“away from Spirituality”) who recycled the Piagetian linear-evolutionary children’s cognition descended from Aristotelian logic.

Along with many of the major sociological moves of the 20th Century that accentuate theoretical scientism, modern psychology has charted the development of the human psyche more toward an evolutionary Darwinian life passage of physical maturation. In this process, it appears the analysis of the psychology of the child has suffered through its elision in Piagetian developmental theory and through a ‘male’ driven psychology. Mary Belenky et al. make the point against a psychology of “knowledge and truth that [is] accepted today... shaped throughout history by the male-dominated majority culture.”

These seeming elisions (and reductive views of age and gender) return us to the explorations above on the aspects of ‘learning from the child’s humility’ from Matthew 18:1-5, which may also offer clarity about what is truly important in the light of the spirituality of the child. These also suggest the need with Levine for the uncovering of a new way of hoping in the other/s through children’s creativity in lived experience as isomorphic to adult spirituality.

Levine shows children’s creativity in lived experience as the quintessential ability children have that enables them to suspend Aristotelian logic in favor of metaphoric logic naturally and to embrace both ‘logics’ simultaneously. The idea that children can simultaneously see, assume, correlate, experience a

310 Shellie-Helane Levine, “A Critique,” 90. Charles Taylor concurs that ‘an incremental view of learning’ dominates genetic psychology via Piagetian thinking that leads to an atomistic passivity – see Human Agency and Language: Philosophical Papers Volume 1 (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press. 1985), 140. The sections below discuss this passive tendency not to suspend logic in favor of creativity within lived experience.


318 Belenky, Women’s, 5.
union, and distinguish the self from the other is central to Levine’s phenomenology of faith. This ‘dual creative act’ speaks to how they might inform a turn to the other/s and a hope in the other/s. They are able to suspend the dichotomy of self-other with the result of experiencing “a union between self and other”—Levine adds here that this dual creative act (suspension and correlation) is a “strategy that is isomorphic to … the creative adult.”319 This ‘dual creative act’ also means that children show this capacity in a way that creates a gestaltic simultaneity of immediately experienced truths. In contrast, Piagetian psychology regards this dual creative act in the child as a lack of conceptual function or as a logical contradiction.320 Space dictates only a brief exploration and summation of the specifics of Levine’s approach to children’s creativity in lived experience through the ‘suspension of dichotomies’.

3/1/2—Salient Differences with Aristotelian-Piagetian Logic

A brief exploration of Levine’s approach to child cognition is necessary to set up an ‘isomorphic’ analogy between the child’s creativity in lived experience and elements of hope in adult spirituality. I also wish to set up here an initial path that may find a connection between the child’s creativity in Levine’s approach and the child’s analogy relationis as the grace of God’s image in Moltmann’s theology.321 Levine parses children’s cognition as five cognitive skills that stand in contrast to a Piagetian theory descended from Aristotelian logic (1. multiple perspectives, 2. logically organized experiences, 3. socially accepted schemas, 4. cognition of the possible, and 5. cognition of truths).322

First, in early forms of Piagetian theory children are unable to dichotomize self-other. This failure is a lack of conceptual functioning through the inability to differentiate the primacy of their viewpoint from that of others. Levine responds that children are able both to suspend dichotomies between self and other (and the subject and object) and to organize these respective experiences in a union between self and other. Quoting Gardner et al., she explains the presence of these abilities in children as young as two years of age.323 The capability to suspend dichotomies points to the capacity within children for a sensitivity that illuminates both experiences of self and other “as” experienced. Children thereby understand a

320 Levine is not proposing here that adults cannot experience these suspensions more effectively and with more consistency.
321 Referencing Romans 3:25 and Colossians 1:14, Moltmann writes, “…if there is grace even in the preservation of the world, then there must also be grace in the creation of the world, from the very beginning” – see God in, 335, n31. See section 3/3 for the development of this ‘connection’.
323 Levine, “Children’s,” 124, quoting, H. Gardner, Kornhaber, M. & Wake, W. Intelligence: Multiple Perspectives (Fort Worth, TX: Harcourt Brace, 1996), 116. Levine’s reference to the ‘two-year’ age here, and the lack of references elsewhere in her research to younger children, suggests that she does not engage (in agreement or disagreement) the object relations theory claim that the developing infant moves over time from a sense of fusion with the mother to a sense of recognizing difference.
dichotomy’s respective unity and its contrasts. Levine here shows in young children the ability to engage creativity in lived experience, and philosophical wondering.

Second, the Piagetian theory claims that children are unable to organize cognition in terms of the rules of Aristotelian logic. In other words, that they fail or violate two theoretical tests: 1) the principle of non-contradiction (If A = A, then A = B is a contradiction), and 2) the law of the excluded middle (a proposition cannot be both true and false). The Piagetian assessment has given rise to the normative conclusion that a child’s cognition is less adequate than that of adults. Levine responds that children can both organize according to Aristotelian logic and suspend such theoretical logic to activate what she describes as a creative process of metaphoric logic. She uses the example of the broom a three-year-old child uses as a horse. The child shows a quintessential ability to suspend the contradiction (broom-horse) to realize through lived experience both realities as if they were one truth. The child finds unity in two seemingly contradictory realities (or contradictory gestalts – broom-horse). For a connection to the later explorations with Moltmann and Ricoeur, this ‘uniting-in-contradiction’ shows the ability to reconcile contradictions by opening a creative unity with the other/s in difference. As Levine writes, “[the child realizes] the integration of opposing meanings.” What Levine implicitly brings into view is a creative opening to hope in the other/s in psychology. Levine takes up both the tensioned struggle in relations and the idea that opposing meanings can engage in intimate relation.

Third, the Piagetian theory understands the typical interpretation of experience as developed via ‘schemas’ or socially shared concepts. Children thus must learn to use these schemas through their evolution into the ‘sophistication’ of adulthood. Levine responds that to limit schemas to the penumbra of developmental theory elides the child’s ability to suspend schemas to preserve the depth of lived reality and experience. The Piagetian idea places adult sophistication on the opposite end of childlike ‘egocentricity’. What we find instead with Levine is the child’s quintessential ability to suspend abstractions for the sake of entering lived experience and be ‘present’. According to Levine, the child suspends the dichotomies of Aristotelian logic in favor of metaphoric ways for the sake of ‘entering in’ its lived reality.

326 Levine defines ‘gestalt’ as a precisely constructed idea made up of its components, and thus not as the mere addition of elements. For instance, we can perceive ‘light’ as a gestalt formed of transmitted illumination from two gestaltic structures such as sun or lamp. We can thus say that ‘sun’ and ‘lamp’ are isomorphic. To use Levine’s example of ‘broom’ and ‘horse’ we might see that the child understands implicitly and explicitly both the commonalities and contradictions of the gestalt structures undergirding the gestalt paradigm (“Children’s,” 126). Charles Taylor affirms the Piagetian opposition to gestalt psychology and points to a blindness (in cognitive psychology) that comes from “a too great confidence in its rationalist and mechanist assumptions” – Human, 142, 187.
328 For a comparison to Moltmann’s discussions on the psychological liberation of the human see Crucified, 291-316.
We may describe this ‘entering in its lived reality’ as transcending the dichotomy between material and non-material reality; self and other, and the subject and object. In other words, the approach of ‘Like’ is only known by ‘like’ affirms and accepts truth as it already is. However, in contrast, the child suspends this correspondence of ‘like that requires like’ to show human essence as inseparable from its turn to the other/s. The child thus normalizes the idea of tensioned unity-across-diversity that occurs through the suspension of dichotomy.\(^{329}\) It does this by naturally uniting the duality and difference between truths, existences, and realities that hierarchical stage theories treat as irreconcilable.

We see again here the creative opening Levine’s psychology offers for a hope in the other/s in lived experience. Albert Schütz and Thomas Luckmann (as well as Levine) affirm that adults do not suspend schemas because of their tendency to repeat the past without proper challenge to new information, and because of a kind of ‘taken for granted’ attitude.\(^{330}\) Levine writes that children in contrast “embrace the lived experience precisely as it is lived.”\(^{331}\)

According to Levine the natural attribute in children preserves a “richness of the detail of lived-reality.”\(^{332}\) We have seen so far how this aspect of Levine’s children’s cognition informs the child’s ability to enter the richness of lived reality fully. We might further describe this transcending the dichotomy between material and non-material reality as entering a more profound and broader reality and actualization of the self within context in a turn of hope in the other/s. The fourth and fifth attributes of Levine’s difference to Piagetian thinking which continue the ideas already mined above do not need too much further elaboration.

Fourth, Piagetian correspondence theory of truth assesses the child’s metaphoric logic (i.e., broom-horse as one) as a state of ‘pleasure seeking’ that points out an inability to grasp truth. Levine responds that the child enters lived reality in a way that makes them capable of holding two truths at once. They cognize two truths simultaneously: one as actually present reality (material entity), the other as a metaphorically present reality (absent entity). These two truths here show a quintessential ability to sensitize dual realities (as real and qualitatively distinct). Levine thus sets up the child’s ability to reconcile the space between correspondence and contradiction in lived experience.

Lastly, a common currency within Piagetian theory is the appreciation of possibilities derived through hypothetico-deductive reasoning. Through this theory of reasoning, children would need to show intelligence by being able to explain phenomena via the systematic observation of possible events. Developmental theory here relegates the child’s cognitive abilities to a kind of ‘problem-solving’ approach.\(^{333}\) Levine responds that the appreciation of possibilities grounded only in hypothetico-deductive reasoning is an abstraction of the child’s creativity in lived experience. She shows that this Piagetian

\(^{329}\) See chapter one, notes 22 and 27.
\(^{330}\) Schütz and Luckmann, *Structures*, 159.
\(^{331}\) Levine, “Children’s,” 127.
\(^{332}\) Levine, “Children’s,” 127.
\(^{333}\) Levine, “Children’s,” 128.
emphasis is tied to the presupposition “that the future will mirror the past.” She explains here that children can, while keeping the ability to suspend hypothetico-deductive reasoning, also seek experiences that have yet not occurred. This ‘dual creative act’ gives them the ability “[to] inquire into the unknown – and to seek possible meanings which, prior to the inquiry, had not yet been revealed.” As noted, they can move from the ‘pre-established typifications’ (Schütz and Luckmann) to show a creatively intuitive ability. Children here show an ability “…to interpret phenomena as an open field of meanings, without pre-delineated boundaries of societally accepted schemata.”

334 Levine, “Children’s,” 128; see also Schütz and Luckmann, Structures, 241.
335 Levine, “Children’s,” 129.
336 Levine, “Children’s,” 129.
337 See Moltmann, God for, 137-139.
‘embodiment’ of God’s love for the other/s and hope in the other/s in the life of Jesus. It might also tacitly point to the Christ-event as the quintessential focus for the human condition of peace in the world.\(^\text{338}\)

What seems to have surfaced here in the child’s suspension of dichotomy is a kind of ‘mirroring’ of God’s image in the child that speaks of the embrace of the tensioned struggle and suspension of dichotomy. God’s image in the child in this sense is a ‘grace’ (in its ‘creative’ response through a suspension of the dichotomy between self and other) that mirrors an ‘analogia relationis’ of God’s creative gift to the creation. We might say in another sense that the child’s ‘suspension of dichotomy’ here ‘prophesies’ or ‘symbolizes’ Jesus Christ’s embrace of the tensioned struggle through ‘suspending the dichotomy’ between self and the other/s in the Christ-event.\(^\text{339}\)

Levine has argued that children can embrace both Aristotelian and metaphoric logic. In this sense, Levine’s child does not reject either aspect of logic but shows an ability to function in both, even simultaneously. It is this quality of creativity in lived experience that informs for this exploration an opening toward a comparison with Moltmann’s theology of hope in the other/s and Ricoeur’s ‘logic of superabundant hope in the other/s’. Levine posits the child’s creativity in lived experience as a suspension of the dichotomy between self and other. This suspension of dichotomy in the child is quintessential for experiencing the self in lived experience, and for inquiring into the unknown (or other).\(^\text{340}\) The quintessential turn to the other/s implicit in the child’s suspension of dichotomy speaks directly to this study’s exploration of how we may hope in and with the other/s in Moltmann’s theology and Ricoeur’s philosophy.

The idea of child cognition as ‘isomorphic to adult spirituality’ thus shows a reversal by Levine of the idea that the child’s creativity in lived experience is in any way deficient to the cognitive abilities of adults. Levine here recovers through her psychology attributes of the child’s lived experience quintessential to adult spirituality. Her focus is not on describing what adults do with their spirituality. Her focus is instead to show that the child fulfills in their lived experiences all the standards or abilities which hierarchical stage theory attribute only to adulthood.

In the positive sense, Levine makes the implicit point through her appeal for isomorphism that adults have much to learn from the way children live out these so-called ‘mature developmental standards’.

In a negative sense, Levine’s child cognition implicitly reveals the unrealized potentialities in adult spirituality. For instance, formal operational thinking accepts the self-other dichotomy as a standard for adult living and sees the failure to accept it as a ‘lack of intelligence’. In contrast, what surface for us here

\(^\text{338}\) See also chapter two (2/2/1).

\(^\text{339}\) Levine, “Children’s,” 133. Levine has presented in her ‘phenomenology of faith’ a ‘parallel’ to the explorations so far on Moltmann’s pneumatological christology in chapter two (2/1/5). See also the further explorations on related aspects of this subject in chapter three (3/3) and chapter four (4/1/2). See Spirit, 63-65, 149. Levine’s ‘phenomenology of faith’ that she also applies to all ‘faiths’, whether that is Jewish, Christian, Buddhist, Islamic, etc., speaks to a ‘grace’ present in the child affirmed implicitly by Moltmann (see God in, 335, n3, and section 3/3 below) – see Levine’s discussion on the presence of the Sacred, “Children’s,” 129-134. See also Consciousness, 209-214. See also chapter two (2/2/1), and chapter two (2/1/4).

\(^\text{340}\) Levine, “Children’s,” 122.
are the potential consequences of the effect of dichotomous thinking between self and the other/s. For instance, we might see at work here in dichotomous thinking, a *loss of hope in the other/s through a preference for ‘like’*. This ‘preference’ may result in acts of violence committed against the other/s of a different culture, gender, sexuality, race, and economic status. In contrast, according to Levine, it is noteworthy that children as young as two years old show the tendency to both suspend dichotomy and experience a union between subject and object and self and other.  

Levine’s child cognition shows the child resolving naturally in its lived experience. According to Levine, the child faces, embraces, and reconciles the problematic, which also implies a ‘response of humility’ in the child. Levine opens for us here our later explorations with Moltmann of the *wonder of first sight*, here as a *philosophical wondering* that we might deduce from the little child’s approach to life.

In closing this section, Levine’s analysis calls for two further questions and some concluding thoughts. First, if ‘hopeful reasoning’ is available to the child then we should ask: what is the effect of suppressing this ‘reasoning’ in the children themselves? Regarding William Wordsworth, Hay et al. make the point for not smothering early spiritual awareness. They ask whether “the original spiritual vision of childhood was perhaps locked out of awareness as we enter the ‘prison house’ of adult life”?

The second question follows the first. It asks of adults that if a *life of hope in the other/s* is suppressed in their childhood, whether they might themselves still be carrying the consequences of those repressions (“repressed out of consciousness”)? However, despite this possibility, as this study’s other explorations have shown, it is the Christ who comes in grace and love to redeem humanity and creation from even its despair.

There seems to have surfaced in Levine’s argument on child spirituality what may inform how we may *hope in others*. Levine places the phenomenology of child spirituality *in our midst*. She here further illuminates the first explorations of this chapter on Jesus’s ‘object lesson’ in humility when he placed the child amid the disciples. We might also say that her argument has implicitly informed an illumination of the contrast between the humility of the child and adult competitive selfishness.

Levine’s approach to children’s creativity in lived experience as isomorphic to adult spirituality has informed a way of *hoping in the other/s*. The next section now explores, without any reference to children, Ricoeur’s parallel argument for a ‘surplus of meaning’ or hope in ‘other’ that rises from the paradoxical relation between hope and radical evil. The section following Ricoeur’s (3/2) will take up convergences between the aspect of childlike humility and Ricoeur’s paradoxical view of the source of evil (3/3).

---

Ricoeur’s ‘Hope’ in Initial Conversation with Moltmann

With his specific reference to the influence of Moltmann’s *Theology of Hope* Ricoeur invites a comparison between a theology of hope in the other/s and a ‘surplus of meaning’ in hermeneutical philosophy.344 His references to Moltmann’s new-creational surplus of eschatological hope inform a ‘setting at proximity’ between philosophy and theology. He also articulates how this ‘proximity’ might affect our understanding of a hope in the other/s.345 He sees Moltmann’s eschatological promise as a hope that makes effective ‘an irruption into a closed order.’ According to Ricoeur, this hope opens to a new ethics and phenomenology for understanding human capability in existence and history.346 I center this exploration, therefore, largely on Ricoeur’s appropriation from Moltmann of the idea and experience “…of a theology of history ruled by the tension between promise and fulfillment.”347

Ricoeur asks the question: What is hope, and what does hope mean for biblical theology?348

In his exploration of this question, he takes up the idea that it is in the eschatological promise of the resurrection ‘in spite of’ death that we may find the kind of hope in the other/s that might speak to the relation between subject and object; self and other, and human and divine. He situates his hermeneutical philosophy, therefore, in the hope in the other/s we find in the Christ-event. It is ‘the event’ experienced through the resurrected Christ which is the ‘sign’ of hope in the other/s. Ricoeur observes that the turn by Moltmann to the eschatological future is something that ought to bring about a revision of all theological concepts. He argues that this revision ought to be carried out “…on the basis of an exegesis ruled by the preaching of the kingdom to come.”349 Theology viewed in such a frame becomes as he proposes, ‘freedom in the light of hope’.350 The resurrection is for him a sign “…that now the promise is for all persons; its meaning abides in the future, in the death of death, the resurrection of all from the dead.”351 With Moltmann, he breaks from the temporal manifestations of the eternal Being evident in the Greek christologies. He also takes up with Kierkegaard the paradoxicality of a hope in the other/s ‘in spite of’ death. He sees its irrationality in the logic of superabundant hope of the Pauline verse, “When sin increased, grace abounded all the more.”352 This tensioned overflow of hope in the other/s or ‘passion of the possible’ brings us to some aspects of the relation between hope and evil in Ricoeur’s philosophy.

---

344 I try here as much as is possible to make clear the distinction Ricoeur gives to his different thoughts on kerygmatic hope and on philosophical hope. Broadly speaking, he organizes his theological analysis on a “Christological basis of witness”; and his philosophical analysis “in terms of man’s desire to be” – see *Conflict*, 343-344; *Critique*, 139-170.
345 Ricoeur, *Conflict*, 411. Ricoeur owes much of his thinking on ‘other’ to a not entirely unqualified taking up of Emmanuel Lévinas’s philosophy of ‘other’. See *Soi-même* (1990); *Figuring*, 262-275.
346 Ricoeur, *Conflict*, 411.
347 Ricoeur, *Figuring*, 204.
348 Ricoeur, *Figuring*, 204.
349 Ricoeur, *Figuring*, 204.
350 Ricoeur, *Conflict*, 402.
351 Ricoeur, *Figuring*, 205.
The questions Ricoeur raises cannot exclude an exploration of the ‘absurd logic’ (using Kierkegaard’s term) of how a superabundant hope in the resurrection overcomes the ‘logic of repetitive sin’. Ricoeur shows that we surpass this ‘logic of repetitive sin’ in the ‘absurd logic’ of the ‘not yet’ of hope which he calls a ‘logic of superabundance’ in the ‘how much more’ of Romans 5:10.353 If the ‘not yet’ that Ricoeur draws on from Moltmann’s eschatological hope is to stand up to scrutiny, we must observe its action at the bottom of the abyss of evil and hell as it were. I am searching here, therefore, for a hope in the other/s through Ricoeur’s hermeneutical philosophy that might present meaning to human existence in the face of ‘failed reflection’. Ricoeur argues that it is the ‘logic of surplus’ and excess’ that “…permits us to return to the problem of evil.”354 He, therefore, examines evil ‘under the sign of hope’. However, then we should ask how hope speaks in and to the abyssal manifestations of evil in human existence? We may see that an exploration for a hope in the other/s that informs a world of peace cannot bypass at least a discussion of some aspects of the relation between hope and evil.355

I am also implicitly here accessing the question of the forward-looking ‘hope in the other/s’ in Moltmann’s understanding of a response to violence in the 21st Century. Moltmann argues for “The world that is good, just as God is goodness.”356 The ‘freedom’ God gives is thus (as also with Ricoeur) a ‘freedom in the light of hope’ through the resurrection. Moltmann commits to a confidence in God’s ‘how much more’ of grace which he understands expects and predicts every possibility for the fulfillment of ‘God’s loving pleasure’ over his creation, even that of the creation’s freedom to choose. God frames this freedom within a ‘necessity’ to which the whole creation is bound to an open-ended justice unto salvation or ‘judgment unto salvation’ (to use Nik Ansell’s term).357

Freedom here takes up two aspects as follows, “the liberation from compulsion and necessity, and the striving for the realization of the Good.”358 Relevant to the correlation between Moltmann and Ricoeur is how they situate the ‘how much more’ of ‘abounding’ grace over ‘increasing’ sin. Moltmann here shows that God comes not for the sake of evil and sin (i.e., as a negative necessary for the positive) but for the sake of perfecting the creation (i.e., as a positive that takes up into itself the negative).359 An exploration of Ricoeur’s evil-sin paradigm seems thus according to Moltmann’s influence to be a movement of hope forward toward a ‘freedom in the light of hope’ quintessential to peace in the world.360

353 Ricoeur, Conflict, 374.
354 Ricoeur, Conflict, 437.
355 Despite the primarily kerygmatic emphasis of this discussion, Ricoeur’s ‘freedom philosophy through hope’ also has as its focus a religious discourse within the limits of reason (Conflict, 404). The unfolding exploration thus also implies some elements of how Ricoeur establishes a ‘logic’ of surplus.
356 Moltmann, Trinity, 112.
358 Moltmann, Trinity, 214.
359 Moltmann, Trinity, 116.
360 Ricoeur, Conflict, 300. The scope of this study allows for only a limited exploration of the relationship between the problem of evil and the promise of hope in Ricoeur’s hermeneutical philosophy; also, of the details of correspondence and contradiction between Moltmann and Ricoeur’s understandings of freedom.
Ricoeur uses the network of ‘evil, freedom, and obligation’ as an examplar to reveal the emergence of a ‘surplus of meaning’ through the ‘failure of reflection’. He shows the work of hope in ‘failed reflection’ as three steps: 1) I am the author of my freedom to originate evil, 2) A link exists between evil and an obligation, and 3) Evil, because it exists in my act of freedom has no antecedent cause for my doing evil. The ‘failure of reflection’ he describes here is ‘not in vain’ but ‘succeeds’ in giving ‘proper character to a philosophy of limit.’ In other words, ‘evil’ when it is ‘doing’ (the evil that I do) rather than ‘being’ (what evil made me do) creates both the privileged possibility of becoming aware of freedom and a sense of understanding the power to ‘act against’. I emerge from death as it were with the acceptance of the nonknowledge of my origin to discover the “…nonpower of my freedom.” Therefore, this subjective ‘necessity for evil’ expressed in failed reflection presents at the same time a reason for hope. This process in Ricoeur’s thinking shows so far, a demystifying of accusation and punishment (rooted in the now-rejected Gnostic external ‘evil’ world or power). It also speaks to the ‘exuberant abundance of hope in the other/s’ that informs a radical ‘violence-resolving’ love for ‘other’ through the turn to the other/s.

Put in hermeneutical terms, radical evil’s ‘nonpower’ is already present in the very place from which my power proceeds. I must go through both a ‘night of knowing’ and ‘night of power’ so that new freedom can spring up as a hope beyond death. Ricoeur is here prioritizing a ‘logic of surplus’ through his hermeneutics of the text which situates the resurrection primarily as a metaphoric act. In contrast, Moltmann sees the resurrection situated in history as an event (or spectacle) and a symbolic act.

---

361 By ‘failure of reflection’ Ricoeur references the idea that upon ‘reflecting’ we dis-cover that evil ‘is already there’ as non-temporally “anterior…to every evil intention, to every evil action. However, this failure of reflection is not in vain; it succeeds in giving proper character to a philosophy of limit and in distinguishing it from a philosophy of system, such as that of Hegel. The limit is twofold: limit of my knowledge, limit of my power. On the one hand, I do not know the origin of my evil freedom; this nonknowledge of the origin is essential to the very act of my confession of my radically evil freedom…. On the other hand, I discover the nonpower of my freedom. (…I declare that I am responsible for this nonpower) … This contradiction is interior to my freedom; it marks the nonpower of power, the nonfreedom of freedom” – see Conflict, 435-436. See also arguments in parallel, Berdiaev, Destiny, 54.
362 Ricoeur Conflict, 431.
363 Ricoeur explains ‘evil’ as follows: “Evil exists only in my act of taking it upon myself. In this sense, I reject evil as a being – ’I say: it is I who have acted… There is no evil-being; there is only the evil-done-by-me.’ This moves me from ‘in front of to behind responsibility.’ The ‘future of sanction and the past of [my] action committed’ are tied together in the present of my confession” – Conflict, 432.
364 I.e., My freedom allows me both to choose or refuse to do what I should do – see Ricoeur, Conflict, 431.
365 Ricoeur, Conflict, 435.
366 Ricoeur, Conflict, 435.
367 Ricoeur, Conflict, 435. The reader will note here, as in other places, that with Ricoeur, I have employed the first person in the sense of the “I” ‘letting itself be’. I find this device useful as an idea that is, in the Kierkegardian anti-Hegelian sense, practical to the individual, or to whomever, or to each of us, etc. – see Ricoeur, “The Erosion of Tolerance and the resistance of the Intolerable,” in Tolerance between Intolerance and the Intolerable. Diogenes, Issue 176, ed. by Paul Ricoeur (Providence, RI: Berghahn Books, 1996), 195.
368 Ricoeur, Conflict, 422.
369 See Ricoeur, Critique, 154-158. Space does not allow for an exploration in this study of Ricoeur’s important hermeneutics of the text and its nuanced relationship to Moltmann’s exuberant-abundant hope in the resurrection – see Ricoeur, Conflict, 3-96, 395-424; Figuring, 203-216. See also chapter five’s first paragraphs and notes.
Our explorations of this ‘event’ so far, have shown that we cannot view death and suffering on the cross outside of the context of the one single-event double dimension of the cross-resurrection. All mentions of the ‘Christ-event’ in this study always refers to Christ within it as bringing both 1) a ‘full stop’ which ends the ‘old creation’ in death; and 2) a ‘pause’ which shows the beginning of new-creational life in the Spirit.\textsuperscript{370} What this ‘single event-double dimension’ perspective has argued against is the ‘necessity’ of a negative theology for the resolution of evil—so that the focus remains on Jesus Christ in the event (who died and resurrected). Hope in Christ thus takes up all negativity of evil, sin, and death within its exuberant abundance.

With Ricoeur thus, we can only understand evil in the light of the hope for the other/s in a hermeneutics of the resurrection. We know the resurrection only through death, but death does not define it. We understand death when we take it up into the hope that comes through the exuberant abundance of new-creational life in the Spirit of Christ. We might see implied in Ricoeur a resurrection (also with Moltmann in this sense) that announces the end of death (saved from sin and death) and that culminates in the final victory over death at the eschaton according to 1 Corinthians 15:26. It also announces the reign of Christ (who saves for new life) who now reigns until all enemies (evil, sin, death) have been subjected to the Son and brought to the Father—that God may be all in all.\textsuperscript{371} The new creation is thus a new-creational life in the Spirit attained only ex nihilo (on the other side of Jesus’s death on the cross).\textsuperscript{372} Ricoeur (following Moltmann) situates thus through the resurrection a hermeneutical context for a discussion of evil, sin, despair, failure, rejection, alienation, judgment, punishment, stain, and guilt. These attributes are all, as we might describe them, the so-called negative expressions of human freedom.

If we are to speak of hope through a hermeneutics of the resurrection then what of freedom? How can we, in the light of hope, understand the expressions of freedom (in the negative sense) that can produce abyssal evil? Ricoeur here comes full circle back to Moltmann’s exuberant-abundant hope in the resurrection. He reinstates freedom in the movement described as “…the future of the Resurrection of the Christ.”\textsuperscript{373} He resituates the theological and philosophical elements of human existence at the originality of the Christ-event and uses that position to reassess all other positions. As he puts it, “…the psychological, ethical, and even political aspects [of human existence] are not absent; but they are not basic because they are not original.”\textsuperscript{374}

Here also the philosophy of hope through a ‘death into life’ meets the kerygma of the cross of Christ.\textsuperscript{375} We cannot abstract this ‘moment’ of subjectivity from community, family, and the other/s. Ricoeur here

\textsuperscript{370} Moltmann, \textit{Way}, 214.
\textsuperscript{371} 1 Corinthians 15:25-28 ESV.
\textsuperscript{373} Ricoeur, \textit{Conflict}, 406.
\textsuperscript{374} Ricoeur, \textit{Conflict}, 406.
\textsuperscript{375} See Ricoeur’s philosophical analysis of the Kantian dialectic between theoretical and practical reason, which he describes as revealing through a logic of surplus an approximate relation of “hope beyond [the] speculative and practical Good Friday” – \textit{Conflict}, 422.
invigorates through the critique of subjectivity and the antimony of freedom a new passion for the possible through an exuberant-abundant hope in the other/s found in the resurrection.  

Ricoeur’s ‘de-realization’ of evil also invites the radicalization of a passion for the possible in the turn toward and for the ‘other’ as neighbor, as ‘Prophet’, and even as the ‘enemy’.

Moltmann’s theology parallels Ricoeur ‘de-realization’ of evil in two ways. First, Moltmann shows evil as only emerging “in the light of what is good.” We might see here Ricoeur’s rejection of an antecedent cause (evil is not a being, it is what I choose to do). Ricoeur also takes up the wonder of Christ as the ‘miracle of the Logos’ who through the resurrection alone can bring the searchlight of truth on the human condition of evil and violence. He writes, “What in the old theodicy was only the expedient of false knowledge becomes the understanding of hope.”

Second, Moltmann attributes to evil only its “perversion of good” in all human actions. We might see here again in Ricoeur why he situates freedom and its potential for good and evil under the aegis of a hermeneutics of the resurrection. This ‘situating of freedom under a hermeneutics of the resurrection’ may also be why for him “…the death of the old man and the birth of the new creature are understood under the sign of the Cross and the Paschal Victory.” Ricoeur shows that in the drive for fulfillment and totalization, a close connection exists between the inherent perversion in the possibility for evil and the inherent perversion in a pathology for hope. We might argue then from this ‘connection’ the importance of keeping any analysis of evil under the sign of ‘Cross and Paschal Victory’. Ricoeur here recognizes the movement of evil at the point of confession (“It is, indeed, in the confession of evil that I discover the power of subversion of the will”.

Of interest, therefore, to the related exploration with Moltmann’s theology of hope in the other/s are two developments in Ricoeurian thinking that speak to Moltmann’s social trinitarian theology.

First, that Ricoeur’s explication of the performative act of understanding evil as ‘my freedom’ opens the social concepts of action in the ‘what should be done’. This performative act implies not only a relation between God and myself but importantly myself to the other/s. It is a turn through obligation toward ‘other’ that stands in some ways like Lévinas’s turn from the ‘Nothing’ to the other. This performative act also

---

376 Ricoeur, Conflict, 413.
377 Ricoeur, Conflict, 432.
378 Ricoeur’s philosophical anthropology here opens to the transformative-liberative practical effect in liberation contexts of the human ‘capability’ in the turn to the other/s, which with Moltmann, underlies a tensioned hope that can preserve both an eschatologically prophetic vision and political action. He writes, “Hermeneutics without a project of liberation is blind, but a project of emancipation without historical experience is empty” – see Lectures, 237.
379 Compare Moltmann, God in, 233-234 and Ricoeur, Conflict, 345.
380 Ricoeur, Conflict, 435.
381 Ricoeur, Conflict, 314
382 Compare Moltmann, God in, 168 and Ricoeur, Conflict, 423.
383 Ricoeur, Conflict, 384.
384 Ricoeur, Conflict, 423.
385 Ricoeur, Conflict, 434.
386 For Lévinas the “Nothing” is ‘night’ that already murmurs, and therefore, has already occurred, and as Howard Caygill states, “has been survived” (Lévinas and the Political (New York, NY: Routledge, 2002), 57). Lévinas never
informs Moltmann’s understanding of the imago Dei which shares some attributes here with Ricoeur’s non-substantive definition of evil.\textsuperscript{387}

Moltmann has defined the Imago Dei as “God’s relationship to human beings”—God puts Godself in a relationship with human beings. We remember that this relationship is one in which the human is God’s image. Moltmann here shows the direction of 1) God choosing that relationship with humans, and 2) God relating to humans in God’s image. The direction is from God.\textsuperscript{388} What surfaces thus is that if no one who lives or has lived (irrespective of how they lived) can be beyond God’s love for them, then neither can they be beyond the possibility of hoping in the other/s. This grace of God also shows us that the God who chooses to love thus does not give up on any human and gives dignity even to the one who lives in opposition to God’s love. Because of God’s abiding presence in the earth this dignity that God gives to the human is as puts Moltmann, “unforfeitable, irrelinquishable and indestructible.”\textsuperscript{389}

What completes the imago Dei then? How are sin and evil resolved? For responses to the problem of evil in the light of Moltmann’s imago Dei, I continue here the idea that God is our starting point. In this sense, the imago Dei is a theological term that makes sense only as God’s desire for a relationship with humanity and creation. This theological idea is, through God, thus also inseparable from a corresponding hope in the other/s (of the human and creational community). Moltmann writes,

Consequently, human beings remain ‘in substance’ God’s image on earth. Neither in the Old Testament nor in the New is there any evidence that after the Fall the human being ceased to be the image of God and therefore a human being (cf. Gen. 5.2,3; 9.6).\textsuperscript{390}

Second, Ricoeur engages a process of hope that works by the ‘assumption’ of a theology of anger into and in a theology of love. He develops this ‘process of hope’ from Moltmann’s social trinitarian theology of the exuberant abundance of hope in the Christ-event. Divine love here revealed in spite of death speaks
to the question of violence resolution in ethics and sociology. Ricoeur contends for the possibility of this resolution. He shows that hope can rise in the tensioned struggle between evil and obligation (both found in freedom).\textsuperscript{391} Here the superabundance of love seen at the Christ-event radicalizes hope. Ricoeur argues through this surplus of hope that even “grieving the Spirit” results, not in an expectation of judgment but the “sadness of love.”\textsuperscript{392} Both Moltmann and Ricoeur appear thus to absorb the “in spite of” of evil within the “how much more” of Paul’s Romans 5:12-20. Ricoeur, however, uniquely engages the working of this exuberant-abundant hope in the other/s at the point of confession.

Ricoeur’s linking of an exuberant-abundant hope in the other/s to ‘confession’ (also with Levinas) works from the non-knowledge of origin and the non-power of freedom. From this non-knowledge and non-power, the recovery enables the turn (or confession, or ‘doing’).\textsuperscript{393} The possibility of hope in the other/s reveals itself through this recovery as ‘confession’.

Ricoeur’s use of ‘confession’ is as an action which stands consistent with his definition of evil as not a ‘being’ but a ‘doing’. Likewise, the ‘doing’ in recovery becomes a ‘confession’. He writes,

\begin{quote}
The ‘passion for the possible’ has already taken possession of the confession of evil; repentance, essentially directed toward the future, has already cut itself off from remorse, which is a brooding reflection on the past.\textsuperscript{394}
\end{quote}

Ricoeur’s ‘surplus of meaning’ (which I have described as an exuberant-abundant hope in the other/s) is thus rooted in the sociality of confession. ‘Surplus of meaning’ is also rooted in a relation of confession that does not depend on our reflection but the encounter with the ‘nonpower’ of power. This encounter comes in the face of the resurrected Christ so that we may find the ‘exuberant-abundant excess of hope in the other/s’. Our ‘reflection’ did not produce this ‘encounter’, but our reflection ‘succeeds’.\textsuperscript{395} Ricoeur’s evil-freedom-obligation reflection thus opens subjectivity to the self-other relation (or mediation) because of the ‘exuberant-abundant meaning’ found in a ‘hope beyond death’. Kerygmatically, we might say that Ricoeur’s ‘de-realization’ of evil enables us to face death for the sake of new life.\textsuperscript{396}

\textsuperscript{391} Ricoeur, Conflict, 351.

\textsuperscript{392} Ricoeur, Conflict, 351.

\textsuperscript{393} ‘Confession’ according to the scriptural witness (and Ricoeur may be implicitly making this point) is as a way of life. D. Fürst shows ‘confession’—ὁμολογία (ὁμόλογος as being ‘of one mind’)—as a liturgical word meaning both “praise” and “to confess publicly, or openly.” The call to ‘praise’ and ‘open confession of life’ goes out according to Romans 15:9 not only through the mediation but also through the presence of Christ (see The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology (London, UK: Paternoster Press, 1971), 344-348). BDAG defines ‘confession’ as a ‘conceding to something that is factual or true, and to admitting to it, to profess our allegiance to it, to praise it,’ etc. – see BDAG, s.v. “ὁμολογία,” 708-709. I take up here the use of this word as ‘a way of life’ both in what it ‘arrests’ (or ends) by confession, and by what it ‘opens’ forward of hope (of the new) in freedom for the other/s, both of which are made possible by the presence of the Spirit of Christ.

\textsuperscript{394} Ricoeur, Conflict, 438. Ricoeur holds onto the word ‘repentance’ in his explication of the turn in hope to the future. Moltmann prefers the word ‘conversion’ which he uses “…to keep the idea free from the flavor of self-punishment. Conversion means turning around, the turn from violence to justice, for isolation to community, from death to life” – see Moltmann, Way, 102.

\textsuperscript{395} See Ricoeur, Conflict, 435, and 437.

\textsuperscript{396} The question does, however, arise whether Ricoeur’s logic of surplus through hope (and Moltmann’s social trinitarian theology of surplus of new-creational life in eschatological perspective) do enough to address rampant evil and sin in the contemporary human. Moltmann believes that a doctrine of sin “does nothing but harm” if applied
Ricoeur’s idea of ‘exuberant-abundant hope’ also brings us to an exploration of his treatment of the methodological problem of ‘original sin’. He reflects on its meaning to retrieve an ‘announcement’ that “denounces evil and pronounces absolution.” He argues that only when the concept of original sin is torn down will the false knowledge of “juridical category of debt” and “biological category of inheritance” be exposed. However, he is not ‘negative’ to the Church’s confession of sins. Rather, he takes up here again the ‘negative’ within the context of an exuberant-abundant hope in the resurrection. He shows that false knowledge is also a true symbol in that its defeat is “…the other side of working toward the recovery of meaning.”

He recovers ‘original sin’ in its ‘orthodox intention’ as,

…no longer juridical knowledge, biblical knowledge, or, worse yet, juridical-biological knowledge concerning some kind of monstrous hereditary guilt [but as] rather a rational symbol of what we declare most profoundly in the confession of sins.

He retrieves its ‘truth’ against [my comments], “… [an] inconsistent notion [of] a juridical category of debt [e.g., guilt] and a biological category of inheritance [e.g., inherited stain from birth].” He highlights for us so far, his opposition to the La Rochelle Confession of Faith, article 9, in its incongruence and speculative (and scholastic) inconsistency of the non-biblical concept of original sin as “…the original guilt of little children in the wombs of their mothers.”

outside and ‘in isolation’ from a ‘therapeutical circle’ (i.e., that embraces the knowledge of Christ, the knowledge of our misery, and the new life of faith) (Spirit, 128). Without denying the importance of the ‘therapeutic’, Moltmann shows that the greater problem in Protestantism has been its blindness to the sufferings of victims and structural sin through “looking too exclusively at individuals” (Spirit, 128). For a critique of Moltmann’s doctrine of sin, see McDougall, Pilgrimage, 147-151.

397 Ricoeur, Conflict, 270.
398 Ricoeur, Conflict, 270.
399 Ricoeur, Conflict, 270.
400 Ricoeur, Conflict, 270.
401 Ricoeur, Conflict, 270.
402 Ricoeur, Conflict, 270.
403 Ricoeur, Conflict, 270. Ricoeur defines the symbolism of sin as “wounded relationship,” and not as a ‘stain’, or “impure contact” — Conflict, 428. He describes the relation between sin and evil as the discovery of evil that is ‘already there’ at the source of the schema of inheritance (as a symbol of ‘before,’ which the ‘myth of the first Adam gathers up’). Sin, thus anterior to awakening consciousness, has a ‘communal dimension’ that is “irreducible to individual responsibility” — Conflict, 284. When responsibility awakens in me, evil is already here in, outside, and before me — I do not begin it but by continuing it I implicate myself in it. Ricoeur here opposes the literal interpretation of the ‘old Adamic man’ condition projected into history. He defines the schema of inheritance as a ‘type,’ or a myth, that should not be translated into the absurd history of quasi-juridical guilt for the sins of an ‘other’ past man. He opens a way of seeing the treasure in the Adamic myth between the “…naive historicism of fundamentalism and the bloodless moralism of rationalism” (Conflict, 285). Evil is thus not at the radical level of generation which places ‘original sin’ as the ‘antitype’ of regeneration or the new birth (see Conflict, 286). For further aspects of Ricoeur’s symbolism of evil, see Ibid, 426, 429. There is still here a need for the further development of the idea and experience of sin and evil, i.e., how guilt forms without the idea of ‘stain’. However, the scope of the study will not allow further explorations on this subject. What the present explorations leave open for future explorations are the questions: How does evil as doing change the guilt picture in cases of the choice to do evil; how does this affect evil’s outworking as NOT nature, but as doing? Also, where and how does wisdom come in and work to bring change in situations that continue to refuse the choice of change for the good of hope in the other/s?
404 Ricoeur, Conflict, 269. Modern confessions tend to be close here to Ricoeur, such as the Presbyterian Church of Canada’s ‘Living Faith’, that states plainly, “sin is a power present.”
Ricoeur shifts thus from situating blame and stain as a ‘human essence’. This shift involves not only a turn to the past and history but to the future ‘Other’ who comes as Prophet, Comforter, and Spirit. This shift from the ‘idea of essence’ also brings a tensioned struggle into view of the human’s consciousness.

The hermeneutics of suspicion enters here into a tensioned struggle that confronts and ‘humiliates’ my over-certain faith (or my faith rooted in onto-theology) to open me toward hope in the Other who is in Spirit and who comes. What Ricoeur thus also shows is that any easy acceptance of faith is a naiveté that escapes the more profound and broader path through the tensioned-struggled encounter with Other. It is this tensioned path that reveals to me the authenticity of Christ’s love through acceptance of Christ’s cross. I search for my hope, therefore, in the ‘completion of my alienation’ (to use Lionel Trilling’s term). The exuberant-abundant hope in the resurrection opens my search for hope in the other/s in the very womb of death. I begin with the grace that shows me why it is God’s superabundant hope in me that enables my hope in Other and the other/s. The hope that enables me to see the ‘light’ of new-creational life is thus also the hope that enables me to see the ‘darkness’ that closes off or ‘ends’ the old man. This same hope opens me up ex-nihilo through faith in Christ to the new man in the new-creational life of the Spirit.

In Ricoeur, therefore, the work of this tensioned struggle to death works not to deprive me of hope but through an exuberant-abundant excess of hope enables a hermeneutical move to an implicit hermeneutics of belief. In this sense with Ricoeur, it is through the present Christ in the resurrection that I can say “Spero ut intelligam: I hope in order to understand.” Ricoeur here ties together the two questions of ‘what can I know’ to ‘what may I hope for’ and thus implicitly situates both ‘seeing and knowing’ and ‘hope’ in the context of communion.

Ricoeur’s analysis of ‘the problem of sin and evil’ takes up thus a context of ‘hope in spite of’ no longer seen as ‘my consciousness’ but opens me to ‘other’. My relation or mediation with the other/s in this sense, reveals my ‘sin or evil’ which is “my true situation before God.” Don Ihde, describing this aspect of Ricoeur’s turn to other explains that the subject does not know himself or herself directly,

...but only in correlation with and through the mirror of the World. The other reveals me to myself in a way which radically modifies any naive or direct self-knowledge.

Ricoeur affirms this observation by stating, “The sinful condition has from the outset a communal dimension.” He indicates that this is why there has to be an ‘other’ or a ‘prophet/ess’ so that they may denounce sin. The ‘self’ cannot critique its consciousness without “both lies, and bad faith.”

---

405 See Don Ihde’s discussion of this shift in – Ihde, “Editor’s,” xxiii.
406 Ricoeur, Figuring, 207.
407 Ricoeur, Conflict, 282.
408 Ihde, “Editor’s,” xxviii.
409 Ricoeur, Conflict, 282.
410 Ricoeur, Conflict, 282.
411 Ricoeur, Conflict, 282.
critique comes from ‘other’ who in the tensioned struggle of that encounter provides the necessary discernment to my consciousness.

These perspectives show that to think of self-conscious voluntarism as an adequate measure of meaning denies or ignores the ‘reality’ or ‘truth’ of a tensioned struggle for discernment through community. Similarly, in Moltmann’s tensioned theology of the Christ-event, an emphasis on self (at the expense of community) correlates to a reliance on the Aristotelian principle of likeness (at the expense of ‘other’). In the case of Israel, the prophet challenges as ‘other’ and ‘outsider’. ‘Like’ needs ‘other’ to understand more profound and broader levels of meaning obtained only through the social dynamic. Ricoeur extends this ‘social dynamic’ (as does Moltmann) to a critical application of public responsibility rooted in a love for the other/s. Of course, the challenge is to understand what a love for the other/s means.

It seems, therefore, that both Ricoeur and Moltmann’s tensioned analyses are appeals or rebuttals through an eschatological hope. This hope works through the new-creationality life in the Spirit for a reduction of violence and other evil actions in the world.412 As noted, Ricoeur points to a public ‘new-creational’ life as a “logic of surplus and excess [that] is as much the folly of the Cross as it is the wisdom of the resurrection.”413 He contends for a hope in new-creational life that exists through the resurrection beyond the Greek logos immediacy. He also touches on the aspect of ‘wonder’ (as wisdom) reflected in both Levine and Moltmann. Similarly, Moltmann observes that we are ‘caught’ and surprised by the novelty of the new creation.414 Ricoeur thus takes up an ‘aporetic’ hope that springs up from this new-creational life as an “excess of meaning.”415 He sees with Moltmann that the resurrection’s ‘excess of meaning’ is an innovation that opposes the ‘promise’ to the ‘Greek logos’. For him, this hope in ‘excess’ is the sign of the ‘new creation’ “whose novelty catches us” and is the “…response of super-abundance of meaning to the abundance of non-sense.”416

Ricoeur’s reference to the “how much more” of Romans 5:12-20 has that aspect of ‘freedom in the light of hope’ for a public ‘logic of superabundance.’ He writes,

\[
\text{This logic of surplus and excess is to be uncovered in daily life, in work and in leisure, in politics and in universal history. The ‘in spite of’ which keeps us in readiness for the denial is only the inverse, the}
\]

---

412 Moltmann sees a place for theology that “participates in the res publica of society, and ‘interferes’ critically and prophetically, because it sees public affairs in the perspective of God’s coming kingdom” – God for, 252. Similarly, Ricoeur sees a hermeneutic of religious freedom, which, if understood through the Resurrection, informs the way to interpret the psychological, ethical, and political. For instance, ‘freedom in the light of hope’ becomes understood in psychological terms as “creative imagination of the possible”, and in ethical terms as an “ethical face of promise” – Conflict, 406-408. I also sense that Moltmann’s tensioned relation between anxiety and hope has profound and broad implications for contemporary ethical-psychological conditions. However, space does not allow an exploration of the effect of a virtue-ethics of ‘tensioned hope’ in psychology. Again, what I leave open for future explorations are the questions: How might the virtue ethics of tensioned hope inform the increasing worldwide incidences of depression and other personality disorders? How might a view of ‘anxiety’ as the sister of and not the enemy of hope, affect how we treat the clinically depressed patient (see, Moltmann, Experiences in, 41)? See also Denis O’Hara, Hope in Counselling and Psychotherapy (Los Angeles, CA: Sage Publications, 2013), Chapter 5.
413 Ricoeur, Conflict, 410. See also chapter two (2/1/4).
414 Moltmann, Crucified, 105.
415 Ricoeur, Conflict, 411.
416 Ricoeur, Conflict, 411. See also 2 Corinthians 5:17.
Hope is thus not just ‘promise’ (theoretical); it is ‘action’ (mission-practical) through faith.

Ricoeur notices a ‘promissio’ that Moltmann ties to ‘mission’ in an ‘openness’ of hope in the other/s for the future. His ‘move of freedom’ here is in the light of hope. This ‘freedom in hope’ if we derive it from ‘mission’ includes ‘for others’ and finds no meaning again outside of a tensioned-struggled turn to and with the other/s. ‘The other/s’ thus brings into view ‘mission’ (as in or with community) and links this freedom to a hope and exuberant abundance of meaning appositional to all that is “…too much centered on present decision.”

Ricoeur makes a move here for ‘the passion of the possible’ over the existential present that gives a ‘freedom in the light of hope’ for self and the other/s. This ‘passion’ as he explains “…retains in its formulation the mark of the future.”

Ricoeur’s kerygmatic hope thus stands in contrast to “…the subtle emptying of the eschatological dimension” and articulates hope in the other/s through the resurrected crucified God who is coming. The event of the cross-resurrection epitomizes for him a turn not only to the ‘imagination’ of hope but the basis of salvation rooted in a “future action of God.” The meaning of existence within Ricoeur’s framework of exuberant-abundant hope in the other/s is thus in the ‘surplus’ of the resurrection life over death.

Ricoeur has brought us into a view of hope (in the other/s) through the resurrection that transcends the illusion in the ‘claims’ to absolute knowledge. These ‘claims’ were already noted in our explorations so far of the Aristotelian principle of correlation. He follows thus Moltmann’s endeavors to resituate “the central preaching of the Resurrection in an eschatological perspective” which he argues is vital if we are to understand in philosophy and theology a ‘freedom in the light of hope’. I engage now Moltmann’s social trinitarian theology of hope in the other/s in its conversation with Levine and Ricoeur through his challenge to Aristotle’s principle of Likeness.

3/3—Moltmann’s ‘Hope’ in Conversation with Levine and Ricoeur

This chapter began with Jesus’s example of the humility of the child as an antithesis to the disciples’ ‘interest in greatness and power’ (Matthew 18:1-5). Jesus’s example sets up a contrast between living life for the ‘self’ (or ‘like’), and a hope learned by the disciples through their turn to the child (as the other/s). I explore here this aspect of the ‘turn to the other/s’ as a sign and action of hope through its tensioned relation to the Aristotelian principle of Likeness.

---

417 Ricoeur, Conflict, 437.
418 Ricoeur, Conflict, 409.
419 Ricoeur, Conflict, 407.
420 Ricoeur, Conflict, 407.
421 Ricoeur, Conflict, 405, n2.
422 Ricoeur, Conflict, 405.
Moltmann asks, “Are we not ourselves, ‘the others’ for other people?” He intimates thus that if theology or life or anything lives for itself and looks only to know what is like it then why should it be known at all. Moltmann explains that because the Aristotelian Principle of Likeness looks for only what is like it, it affects nothing (“If I know only what is like me, or what already corresponds to me, then, after all, I know only what I know already”424). What would my life’s purpose be if I do not live it in hope for ‘the other’ (human and creational) and I do not seek its meaning in relationship with what is other, unknown, or foreign to myself? In this sense then, Moltmann contends that ‘no schema is complete without the unknown’ and without which it remains abstracted from reality and in the end, is “the illusion of reality.”

Sociology shows that the wonder or astonishment of first encountering what is ‘other’ to us (both positive and negative) soon becomes through repetition, what we ‘learn’ to accept and treat as ‘taken-for-granted’. What we can lose, therefore, is the ‘tensioned’ sense (as in the child) of discovering the world afresh in each new moment of our creatively lived experience. At work here is a learning to hope in the ‘other’ through the ‘tensioned’ relation between the ‘objective’ (as a passive, given, received side) and the ‘subjective’ (as an active, elicited side). Hope thus needs both ‘like’ and ‘other’ and should subsume neither. Elements of both are usually present in every discovery. We can also intentionally preserve and develop the sense of how we may re-discover this new ‘tensioned’ hope in and with the other/s. This tensioned hope speaks to the value of an open, ongoing deepening process of discerning the tensioned struggle to remain in the hope of the new. We have noted in Ricoeur the hope through the exuberant-

423 Moltmann, God for, 136. An unrealized theology of ‘other’ hides both the resistance of past knowledge of our oppressive acts and what still exists in our hearts of present acts of oppression. In contrast, the acts of Christ for the ‘other’ on the cross irrevocably links the cross to the idea of a people of the cross. A theology of the cross works thus to resist oppression. It is in this sense that the cross is a mirror (as ‘other’) to the human ability to destroy itself. I examine here this ‘destruction’ of Other through the recounted spectacle and symbol of the cross and resurrection event. This examination implicitly touches on Paolo Freire’s radical tension of the cross event as indispensable for “new apprenticeship” – see “Education, Liberation and the Church,” Religious Education, 79/4 (1984), 524-545. However, the question stays unanswered of whether outside the cross’s work of hope in the human heart through the Spirit, humanity can overcome either the rising sense of its worries or its violence.

424 Moltmann, God for, 136.

425 In socio-psychology as in theology, the principle of correspondence (such as in the Aristotelian principle of Likeness) refers to community which as Moltmann explains is “between the same and those who have been made the same” (God for, 137). One may understand this principle through the idea of ‘like drawn to like’ which Aristotle develops into a “true friendship [that] rests on the foundation of likeness” (God for, 138). Moltmann, however, proposes that this schema on its own does not allow for a hoping in what is unknown or ‘other’ or ‘different’, and will usually result in loss of hope for and in the other/s. What this kind of schema suggests here is that it can result in opposition to ‘others’ who seen as threats become hostile challenges to the peace of leader; community; culture, or nation. Following on from the explorations of the preceding chapter, Moltmann has shown that opposition should not exist between self and other; known and unknown, and human and divine (the distinction he makes here is between ‘opposition’ and ‘tension’). Moltmann argues instead that the cross-resurrection event points to a ‘taking up of the tension’ in the suspension of dichotomy. I am engaging here this aspect (among others) of ‘non-opposition’ which I have described as taking up an open, ongoing deepening process of discerning the tensioned struggle of exuberant-abundant hope in the ‘suspension of dichotomies for the other/s’ seen in the Christ-event.

426 The ‘unknown’ here may also be as the ‘child’ was to the disciples in the account of Matthew 18:1-5.

427 Moltmann, God for, 147.

428 For the developments of the idea, ‘taken-for-granted’, see Berger, Altars, 20-49.
abundant new-creational life that he sees even at the bottom of the abyss of human evil. In Moltmann’s social trinitarian theology, this hope in the new opens to a daily or moment by moment ‘newness’ of new-creational life in the energies of the Holy Spirit of the resurrection that he describes as ‘living close to the origin of perception’.429

I understand the turn to the other/s in Moltmann’s theology here to always imply a ‘hope in the other/s’.430 If my life consists only in perceiving myself, then I live ‘with like’ by my reflection and not with hope in the other/s.431 Moltmann paraphrases Kant that ‘modern scientific reason’ “has insight only into that which it produces after a plan of its own.”432 Moltmann shows here that since no life on earth is eternal, all life on earth depends on relations of nurture—human, and the rest of creation. ‘Like’s’ drawing unto itself if applied and lived only for itself and for its exclusive benefit leads to the abuse not only of ‘the other/s’ but of ‘like’. ‘Like’ as a human principle then becomes a dehumanizing process both to itself and to the other/s. The end of this process is a loss of hope in others/s or a ‘dehumanizing’ seen in such schemas as agnosticism, narcissism, and an-nihilism.433

Moltmann thus asks (his emphases),

If this is so, must we not try to start from the opposite principles in order to arrive at knowledge of others and community with others? In epistemology, must we not start from the principle ‘Other is only known by other’ and in sociology from the principle ‘The acceptance of others creates community in diversity’?434

We see here in his understanding of ‘other’ his continued affirmation of this chapter’s question: how we may hope in and with the other/s. He takes up this view of hope in the ‘other’ in his theology as follows: first, with reference to Karl Barth, hope in the other/s is the way we might perceive God as Wholly Other. Second, he expresses hope in the other/s as to how another might enable us to transform ourselves. Third, his hope in the other/s speaks of the recognition we give to the other/s.435 Fourth, hope in the other/s is a turn toward the creation itself as the other,436 and fifth, hope in the other/s speaks of community which is itself a continuance of ‘other’ as with and for the other/s.437 We may note here that each of these points upholds the essential idea of ongoing tension.

429 Moltmann, Science, 142.
430 The idea of searching for or turning to the other/s does not mean a ‘forcing’ on other the act of turning toward the other/s.
431 Charles Taylor writes that “[the promise of] total self-possession would in fact be the most total self-loss” – Human, 35.
432 Moltmann, Science, 145. See also Moltmann’s ‘tensioned’ discussion here on overcoming the ‘double track of the modern mind’: 1) its hope of salvation, and 2) its fear of disaster.
433 See Moltmann, God for, 142; Ricoeur, Conflict, 463. As noted, space has not allowed me to take up the transition of this idea to the effect on the self of a similar ‘dehumanizing’ loss of hope. I reference here the possible important effects in psychology and psychotherapy of coming to understand the place of a tensioned hope in acute situations of depression, suicidality, and personalities disorders.
434 Moltmann, God for, 136.
435 Moltmann, God for, 21.
436 Moltmann, God for, 102.
437 Moltmann, God for, 103.
Space does not allow for a full exploration of Moltmann’s concept of other which he links to a ‘hope in the other/s through the exuberant abundance of the new-creational life of Christ’. He roots his understanding of hope in other thus through his theology of the Trinity in perichoretic unity. The ‘other’ seen in this light includes a way of hoping in the other/s ‘from the other side’ as it were. A hoping ‘from the other side’ points to the trinitarian understanding that God creates all things, and thus that the creation ought to reflect the essence of the Trinity as a quintessential unity-across-difference.

Levine’s phenomenological observations also inform this chapter’s explorations on Moltmann’s idea of the other/s? She takes up the idea of ‘childlike wonder and awe’ as “an expression of creativity and philosophical wondering” which the child shows in suspending dichotomies between itself and the other/s. In Moltmann, we see what he describes as a ‘childlike wonder’—i.e., as the humility of an exuberant-abundant hope in the other/s found through God’s promises in the resurrection. For him, as for Ricoeur who follows him on this, the promise is always bigger than fulfillment. It is not the fulfillment that brings promise to the land, because the promise is always bigger, it is always still coming. The promise keeps things open for Moltmann.

The promise of hope in the other/s which we understand in hindsight through the resurrection life also relates closely to the agony of love in the tensioned struggle on the cross. Jesus Christ births ‘wonder’ in the humility of an exuberant abundance of new-creational life. Jesus Christ suspends dichotomy through his embrace of the tensioned-struggled turn to Other on the cross. For the sake of love of Other, the triune God suspends the dichotomy between human and divine in the agony of love. As noted, when one speaks in our human contours of this tensioned struggle on the cross one brings into view the tensioned connection between learning (ἔμαθεν) and passion (πάσχειν, in even choosing to ‘die’). This ‘tensioned connection’ thus links wonder to the wisdom of the reverence (or ‘fear’) of the Lord. We might understand ‘reverence’ here as a giving dignity and respect to the other/s through a humble surrender for their sakes. It is this ‘tensioned connection’ that brings about the giving dignity to, and respect of the other/s in the human and creational community. Through this Christ-event we also take up a childlikeness through the new-creational life of the Spirit of wonder and astonishment of ‘first sight’.

This learning and passion of love in Other through the Spirit of Christ (in and through the cross) comes to interrupt human life’s preoccupation with self. The Other comes as it were to ‘disrupt’ the self’s exclusive drawing toward what is like it and its preoccupation with what does not disturb its peace. ‘Other’ invites humanity to a different narrative of strange, uncharted, and unknown journeys. It says that life not

---

438 Moltmann, God for, 102.
440 As noted above, space will not allow for a detailed exploration of the aspect of creational grace at work in all humanity and creation, as is visible here in the child. Moltmann may presuppose this ‘creational grace’ (see section 3/1/3 above). He writes, “Grace is really already to be found in the divine preservation of the creature who closes himself against God… But if there is grace even in the preservation of the world, then there must also be grace in the creation of the world, from the very beginning” – see God in, 335, n31. Chapter two 2/1/4 and 2/2/1 takes up the aspect of ‘God’s image’ in the child as in the adult. See also Nik Ansell who explores the yet undeveloped aspects of Moltmann’s creational grace, Hell, 278f.
turned to the other/s opens itself to pre-judgments about the other/s (the different; the unknown) and prioritizes what confirms the already (the established; the accepted). Life not turned to the other/s also opens itself, according to Matthew 18:1-5, to prejudgments about the child and the child’s humility.

This creative step of inquiry with Moltmann presupposes a context of difference that comes through God the Other. God shows us both our state and the extreme contrast that exists between the self and God’s love for humanity. This creative step is a journey into the unknown toward the other/s through the Spirit to take up hope in the other/s as Christ does in and through the cross. The cross is thus still the means how humans meet Other (and thus the other/s) as the complete antithesis (or, unknown) to their existence. This One, whom we call ‘God in Christ’, as Moltmann says, “…eludes our ideas, which nail him down, and our concepts, which try to bring him within our grasp; and yet he is closer to us that we ourselves—interior intimo meo, as Augustine knew.” 441 What Moltmann explore here is a childlike wonder and grasping of the superabundant surplus in tension. He takes up thus an exercise of hope in or with the other/s in mystery and depth, and through the Spirit, in a new-creational imagination profounder and broader than my innermost and higher than my utmost? I ask: what would such hope do in a world beset today with worry, depression, and suicidality?

Moltmann also shows that the Jewish writings speak of a God different from one rooted in the idea of “Likeness”. These writings speak of a God who though ‘wholly Other’ has a name and is called upon (Isaiah 55:8), is approachable, possible, and present and is one who shows his affection and love to humanity. 442 According to the history of God’s self-revelation to humanity in the Jewish writings then, the undefined and unknown God lets himself be seen and known.

The tensioned struggle in the Christ-event enables a reflection not of self only but the trinitarian God in perichoretic unity-across-difference. Before the revelation of the cross, there could be no actual or real clarity of the ‘difference’ between God’s love and human violence except as noted above, in philosophical abstractions. The Jewish and Christian writings reveal in this sense a contrast to Greek theology. They reveal a relational God who by his presence makes himself known as ‘Other’. In this ‘making known’ we come to understand not only the ‘Other’ in God but who we really are as ‘Other’ to God and as ‘other’ to all ‘Others’. The Other, God, through Otherness reveals Godself in ways that ‘being’ (in the Aristotelian sense) as ‘like unto like’ and ‘like with like’ could not understand.

We see through Jesus that it was for the joy and hope in and love for the other/s that he subjected himself to the agony of love on the cross. Here, we see the ‘wonder’ as exuberant abundance that overflows the pain of passage to Other. As noted in chapter two, this ‘exuberant abundance that overflows the pain’ is also the framework or context of reference for what the scriptures say to us by the call to pick up our cross and to follow him (“If any desire to come after me, they must … take their cross …” 443). This action

---

441 Moltmann, God for, 152.
442 “And the Lord said, “My presence will go with you, and I will give you rest.” And Moses said to him, “If your presence does not go with us, do not take us up from here…” – Exodus 33:14–19 NET.
443 Translated: Donald A. Hagner, Matthew 14–28, 481; see also Philippians 3:10.
of ‘tensioned hope’ through the cross is also an act of love that the Song of Songs describes as “strong, like death.”444 This love is not ‘in battle with…,’ not ‘competing,’ and not ‘trying to gain victory over…’. Nor is this love a ‘fearing for ourselves’. John’s gospel records that the Son has ‘overcome the world’ and makes a peace that passes all understanding available to all.445 One might also see in this ‘peace that passes all understanding’ a hope, taken up by Ricoeur, that has come so that we may understand.446 Pronouncing this hope ‘in spite of’ death the scriptures announce the ‘night’ as even ‘far gone’ and the day ‘at hand’.447 This hope is sourced in the love by the Other who comes to awaken in humanity a ‘love for nought’ (to use Ricoeur’s term)—the kind of love that escapes the cycle of retribution completely.448 Put differently, the death and resurrection in God awaken a love in us that kindles hope for all the other/s in humanity and creation.

Moltmann thus appeals against the growing indifference toward other life and to its effects on our morality. We see again here a parallel with Levine’s similar appeals against the subsuming of the child as ‘other’ and its effects in a lost spirituality.449 Levine, Moltmann, and Ricoeur have all taken up in the preceding explorations an appeal for a turn to the other/s that opens a path to hope in the world. First, we have explored this path to hope in Levine through the child who by suspending dichotomy, enables “…the experience of a union between self and other.”450 Second, in Moltmann, we explored the turn to the triune God as Other and to the other/s in contrast to the idea and experience of life lived for ‘self’ or ‘like’. Third, in Ricoeur, we explored the logic of superabundant freedom in the light of hope that rises from the very ground of evil.

Ricoeur has also shown a unity-across-difference through a hope in the other/s ‘in spite of’ death.451 In so doing he has offered to our journey so far, a starting point for hope and promise not rooted in radical evil (accusation; punishment). He instead anchors his starting point in the positive movement that must emerge in an ‘exuberant abundance of meaning’ toward hope and a future through the resurrection. The Orlando shootings in 2016 and so many ongoing criminal acts committed against humanity and creation elsewhere throughout the world (such as also more recently in the plight of the Rohingyas) have come about by the lack of hope in others that can lead to the hatred of ‘the other/s.’ Somehow it would seem that in every act of violence, at some point, hope is lost in the other/s—which translates to the removal of dignity from the other/s; the removal also of their humanity and their worth. This removal of dignity and

---

446 Ricoeur, Figuring, 207.
447 Romans 13:12a ESV.
448 Ricoeur, Figuring, 252.
449 Moltmann, God for, 131.
451 Ricoeur, Conflict, 346-348.
humanity is what makes visible the ‘forgetting’ of our human and creational commonality and communalty.\textsuperscript{452}

One might see at work here the pathogeny of a ‘principle of Likeness’ that excludes the ‘unlike’ (as an irreconcilable Aristotelian binary). Important to Moltmann’s theology then (as we have seen in Levine’s psychology and Ricoeur’s philosophy) is the inclusion of an opposite view to the binary oppositions of the Aristotelian epistemological theory of correspondence (or of like begets like). As noted above, the exclusive idea of like begets like leads to the loss of hope in ‘other’ and to what can result in acts of hatred and violence against the other's.\textsuperscript{453} Moltmann contends that how we view the ‘other’ decides all of life—its morals, its spirituality, and its continuance. He shows here the quintessential effect that Christ’s turn in the agony of love to other on the cross might mean for today’s world. Also, of what might be possible if humans take up everywhere even in twos and threes through faith in Christ this tensioned struggled turn of hope in and with the other’s.\textsuperscript{454}

Moltmann’s view of ‘Other known only by other’ translated in sociological terms means “the acceptance of others creates community in diversity.”\textsuperscript{455} I understand this to mean a ‘unity-across-difference’. All three conversation partners engaged here seek an ‘integration’ or ‘reconciliation’ through the ‘re-integration’ of a human discourse within their respective disciplines. In Moltmann, in the turn to the other/s; in Levine, through the suspension of dichotomy in child cognition; in Ricoeur, to a logic of superabundant hope in ‘other’ through the ‘new’ of eschatological hope in the resurrection. In this sense these authors take up an understanding of ‘other’ as no longer the easily rejected ‘alien’ or the ‘threat’ or the ‘foreigner’ or the ‘enemy’ or ‘one subsumed’ or of the child as ‘inferior’ or ‘ignored’, or as the adult rejected through juridical guilt and stain or shame. Their respective understanding of the other/s has informed this chapter’s initial lesson of humility through Jesus’s ‘object lesson’ in his use of the child according to Matthew 18:1-5.

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{452} Charles Fensham appeals that ‘we do no harm’. He exposes the strains of internalized phobias shaped by social factors (including Christian communal and doctrinal expressions) into such attributes as ‘disgust’, among other dispositions. These phobias unjustly discriminate and have generated violent acts of hatred against the LGBTQIA (or GSRM) community – see Do no Harm: The Moral Failure of Christian Churches in Relation to Sexual and Gender Minority People, 43-61 (pre-publication manuscript, 2017).
\item \textsuperscript{453} Moltmann, God for, 137.
\item \textsuperscript{454} The reference here is to the quintessential effect of hope in the ‘turn to the other/s’ implied in Jesus’s recorded saying in Matthew 18:20 (“For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in their midst”). Donald Hagner, whose translation I use here, comments on this final logion as follows, “In my name” is another way of saying ‘under my rule’. This presence of Jesus should not be understood as a metaphor (as in the case of Paul’s statement in 1 Cor 5:4) but is the literal presence of the resurrected Christ, in keeping with the promise to be articulated in 28:20 (cf 1:23b). The community founded by Jesus (16:18) is assured that he will be present in that community until the close of the age. The saying is closely paralleled by the rabbinic saying that where two gather together to study Torah, the Shekinah glory is present with them (in m Abot 3:2; 3:6; b Sanh 39a; bBer 5b). The differences, gathering in the name of Jesus (for study of Torah) and the presence of Jesus (for the Shekinah glory), point to the enormous christological implications of this final logion. It is not far from this sense of the divine presence (cf Joel 2:27; Zech 2:10–11) to the Christology of Paul or of the author of Hebrews” – see Matthew 14–28, 533. Translation, Ibid, 529.
\item \textsuperscript{455} Moltmann, God for, 136.
\end{itemize}
Moltmann’s theology asks that we engage the tensioned struggle of turning in hope to the other/s as fundamental to our existence as humans. He shows the essential tensioned struggle that must exist between the endorsements of correspondences (like begets like) and the conflict of contradiction (Other is only known by other). What is thus paradoxical for Aristotelian logic is possible in social trinitarian theology’s reorganization of reality. Moltmann calls for the ‘sight’ of the mutualities that exist in the Aristotelian self-other dichotomy.

Vital for our purposes, Ricoeur, Levine, and Moltmann (although differences do exist in how they apply ‘tensional logic’) engage ‘the integration of opposing meanings’ without collapsing difference. The tensioned struggle that Moltmann brings into view through Christ’s turn to Other implies not only the possibility of integration but requires facing the other and the tensioned struggle that this may entail. Here, we may see Levinas’s pregnant “obscurity within” that through God-awakened alterity compels a turn to the ‘other’. Moltmann shows this ‘awakened turn to other’ as the wonder and astonishment of ‘first sight’ as a motive for development toward a life of peace with the other/s. For this ‘wonder and astonishment’ to recur or occur it depends on a hope in the other/s that carries an interest in the other/s that is greater than an interest in self. Both wonder and astonishment (awe, the unexpected, with possible negative connotations such as fear of unknown) occur through the tensioned struggle that comes from Other. To bring in Levine also in this, she shows the child highlighting wisdom (through suspension of dichotomies) that for our purposes parallels the theological idea of ‘adults’ giving consent through faith in Christ to the suspension of dichotomy. This consent also implies the embrace of the tensioned struggle of a turn in hope to and with the other/s.

The ‘wisdom’ the child affords us here is in their reversal naturally of the polarizing and dualizing emphases in thinking and action. They suspend the dichotomy of contradictions without eliding duality and differentiation. What the little child does naturally here, as a ‘given grace’, the adult must give consent to through different psychological and situational frameworks. However, what we ought not to miss is the ‘sign’ of this ‘wisdom’ in the little child (i.e., as humility that suspends dichotomy) and the potentially transformative effect of its adoption by the consenting adult. What the child offers to this chapter’s exploration, therefore, is a unique way to approach several conflictive dualistic constructs such as Kant’s concept of morality and Descartes’s division between subject and object, or of the Atheistic denial of the human-divine relation.

---

456 See Moltmann, God for, 150; Levine, “Topology,” 83; Ricoeur, Conflict, 463, 16.
457 Emmanuel Levinas, De L’existence à L’existant (Paris, FR: Fontaine, 1947), 83. The implication here is that one cannot speak of a relationship with God without a pathos for “l’autre” (the other) (“Il est impossible devant cette invasion obscure de s’envelopper en soi, de rentrer dans la coquille. On est exposé” [It is impossible in front of this obscure invasion to envelop ourselves in ourselves, to reenter our shell. We are exposed]). The obscurity within then speaks as we understand it in Lévinas of the complexity of suffering and uncertainty when we are bereft of an encounter with the other. Levinas famously quotes Matthew 25:34-41 as an example of this kind of development where “the relationship with God is presented as a relationship with the other person” [“Matthieu 25: la relation à Dieu y est présentée comme une relation à l’autre homme”] – Levinas, Entre Nous: Essais sur la Pensée-A-L’autre (Paris, FR: Editions Grasset & Fasquelle, 1991), 120.
458 Moltmann, God for, 150.
The *child*, however, is not our only reference for an exploration of the ideas of a suspension of dichotomy and unity-across-difference. In philosophy, Kant and Descartes’ eliminated the “middle’ of man’s being” with the effect of entrenching dichotomous thinking in a ‘split’ between the subject and object.\(^{459}\) In existential theology, Paul Tillich advocates for a ‘bridging over the cleavage’ between self and other without surrendering difference. In Eastern Orthodox theology and philosophy, Nicholas Berdyaev shows a similar argument for a category of ‘spirit reality’. He opposes any juridical religious consciousness that beds itself in concepts at the cost of the wonder of God’s immanent partnership with humanity through the Spirit of Christ.\(^{460}\) Berdyaev indicates here an already present tensioned unity-across-diversity between the history of the ‘spirit’ and human history.\(^{461}\) He returns us thus for a moment to the initial steps of this study’s three-fold journey to a world of peace begun in Moltmann’s declaration.\(^{462}\)

Moltmann’s ‘declaration’ is that “…the experience of reality as history presupposes hope for its future”—which is understood here as hope based on the remembrance of the Christ-event.\(^{463}\) Important also is the argument Berdyaev makes for a ‘spiritual’ reality that is not separated or dualistic but which “…assumes in our fallen world the form of division.”\(^ {464}\) In other words, the coming of Other *brings the ‘tension’ here*. This tension is not oppositional or irreconcilable. This tension makes sense in the light of the resurrection that as Ricoeur has argued has shown us a ‘freedom in the light of hope’. As Moltmann also shows, this same tension is seen in God whose divine longing moves in Godself toward and for “God’s counterpart, his Other”—the human.\(^ {465}\) This ‘tension’ as ‘unity-across-diversity’ represents an alternative theological, sociological, philosophical, and psychological stance. Moltmann contrasts this ‘stance’ to the dichotomy of dualism in conflictive adult-elite Platonic and Aristotelian approaches. In other words, we might say that what faces the ‘tensioned-struggled connection with hope in other through Christ’ is the ‘bridge over the cleavage’ (to use Tillich’s term). This ‘bridge’ opens us to diverse kinds of responses in our relations with the other/s in the world.\(^ {466}\)

It is the triune God in the Christ-event who transcends the ‘cleavage and antithesis’ between dualities of human and divine, and self and other. ‘The ground for the creation of the world’ according to Berdyaev and Moltmann is found within and not outside the Trinity.\(^ {467}\) Ricoeur also alludes to this primordial tension of love as “silence [that] opens up the space for hearkening.”\(^ {468}\) The tension of love on the cross enters the silence of death not as something that a ‘likeness principle’ (in the Aristotelian sense) can impede but as


\(^{460}\) See Berdyaev’s discussions in *History*, 91-100, 134-139.

\(^{461}\) See Moltmann’s discussion of this ‘unity’ in *Trinity*, 46-47.

\(^{462}\) See the first paragraphs of chapter one.

\(^{463}\) Moltmann, *Way*, 236.

\(^{464}\) Berdyaev, *Destiny*, 23.


\(^{466}\) See Tillich, *Courage*, 1-31. Tillich shows that none of Plato, Aristotle, the Stoics, and Nietzsche could bridge the cleavage or dichotomy between the self and other.

\(^{467}\) Moltmann, *Trinity*, 46.

\(^{468}\) Ricoeur, *Conflict*, 451.
the exuberant abundance of hope in or with the other/s. According to Ricoeur, the Logos, Jesus Christ, comes prior to the subject and object dichotomies to ‘gather all things’ to ‘open a future’ of superabundant promise for the other/s. In contrast, as Ricoeur argues [my comments], “…with Nietzsche himself, [when] man as subject becomes man as will… nihilism is not too far distant. The gap [between subject and object] can no longer be bridged.”

When I push for, and to the center as ‘subject,’ as ‘ontology,’ I objectify the world by making my will the ‘locus of value’.

We may see here what Ricoeur terms as ‘the failure of the God of metaphysics’ from which we must return through a suspension of the dichotomy between subject and object, self and other, and known and unknown. With Christ, the human crosses over the ‘cleavage’ through grace by faith in Christ—and walks in an entirely new life of faith in Christ with a hope in the other/s through the Spirit. A response rises here that seems to clarify that any ‘moralizing’ with the human at center (as in an Aristotelian principle of Likeness) is an ineffective way to deal with the problem of violence in the world. Also, any approach to sociology that takes up the radical embrace of the tensioned-struggled turn of hope in the other/s dissolves the natural tendency to objectivate the other/s. In other words, the tensioned turn here to a hope in other/s is a choice to suspend the dichotomy between ‘self’ and ‘the other/s’ for the sake of peace in the world.

We might say, therefore, with Berdyaev, Ricoeur, Levine and Moltmann, that this ‘bridging over the cleavage’ (or suspension of dichotomy) ought also to show commensurable responses of an exuberant-abundant hope in or with the other/s in the structure of our societies, cultures, relations, faiths, and in our economic and political systems. The child’s suspension of dichotomy in Levine has informed this chapter’s inceptive ‘object lesson’ through Jesus’s use of the child. It has also suggested the imaginative and creative ‘grace-bridging’ of seeming opposites as hope in the other/s already at work through the Spirit of God’s love and God’s image in humanity and creation. According to Moltmann’s analogia relationis we take from this suspension of dichotomy in the little child, a reflection of the ‘already’ work of the Spirit in the world seen and known in God’s image, and of what we might hope for in the turn to the other/s. This suspension of dichotomy affects the hope in or with the other/s shown to humanity and creation in the character of the triune God’s perichoretic social tenderness, grace, mercy, and exuberant-abundant love for the other/s. The cross and resurrection event makes known this love to humanity and creation. Paul informs the human response of hope in or with the other/s to such a love in his call for us to be ‘infants concerning evil and wise concerning good’ (“But I want you to be wise in what is good and innocent in what is evil.”

In other words, he asks us to understand the cost of living in such hope and love in and for the other/s through the Spirit of Christ.

---

469 Ricoeur, Conflict, 463.
470 Ricoeur, Conflict, 463.
471 Romans 16:19 NET.
472 1 Corinthians 14:20 NET.
Referencing Berdyaev, Moltmann explains the Christ-event as the ‘center and pivot of the divine-human history’ that alone enables a re-unifying belief and recognition between the history of God’s passion and human history (which is the history of freedom).  

This chapter’s explorations so far have taken up with Ricoeur an aspect of this ‘re-unifying perception’ through his discussion of the relation between human freedom and the work of hope in the other/s through the resurrection. Moltmann, Ricoeur, and Berdyaev similarly show this ‘re-unifying perception’ in the context of hope in the presence of evil as a doing. Moltmann calls this ‘re-unifying and recognition’ of the triune God in the cross-resurrection event “the open history of Christ.”

This chapter’s exploration of Ricoeur’s tensioned struggle between hope and radical evil has shown us the effect of an exuberant-abundant hope in the resurrection (or ‘surplus of meaning’) for the ultimate outcomes of human actions. Alongside Ricoeur, Moltmann’s social trinitarian theology of hope also works for a recapitulation of the potential of resurrection hope in the context of violence. Here, therefore, in the paths of the cross, eternal life swallows up death and opens God’s passage for the subjection of all things by Jesus Christ that God may be all in all (1 Corinthians 15:28). The radical tensioned reconciliation of antitheses in the ‘single event-double dimension’ of the cross and resurrection continues to reveal the exuberant abundance of grace and love at work through hope within humanity and creation. Similarly, Ricoeur’s philosophy has shown even in the chastisement of phenomenology (i.e., in its “descent to the abyss”) that there remains the exuberant abundance of meaning. We saw above this ‘meaning’ at work in Levine’s child cognition psychology. From a theological perspective, this meaning becomes visible as the newness of faith in hope through the resurrection. What the explorations bring into view so far is that this hope which ‘remains in excess’ enables us also to declare with the Pauline new-creational theology, …but where sin increased, grace overflowed in abundance, in order that as sin reigned in death, so also grace might reign through righteousness to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

The triumph of hope which radicalizes human desire for God’s love is already within the perversions of conflicts and violence thus making a synthesis between enemy and enemy possible.

---

473 Moltmann, Trinity, 46.
474 For Berdyaev’s influence on Moltmann’s understanding of the problem of evil sourced in freedom see chapter two (2/2/3). Berdyaev’s ‘mystery of freedom’ as having no origin, and as an ‘ultimate frontier’ has similarity to Ricoeur’s developments of the idea of evil as not a ‘being’ but a ‘doing’ (see chapter three [3/2]). Space does not allow for further explorations of Berdyaev’s analysis of the problem of evil in the context of freedom. He takes up his discussions on this subject in Destiny, 17-31.
475 Moltmann, Experiences of, 2.
477 Ricoeur, Conflict, 422 – quoting Jaspers.
478 Translation of Romans 5:20b-21 by Dunn, Romans 1–8, 270.
479 Chapter four (4/1/3) takes up a qualification of the embrace of the enemy in Volf’s theology of embrace.
3/4—Assessments

This chapter’s explorations have shown the importance in Moltmann’s theology of the inclusion of an opposite view to the binary oppositions of the Aristotelian epistemological theory of correspondence (or ‘like begets like’). The idea that like begets like leads, as noted, to the other/s “not being known at all.”

This idea of ‘like’ is both a futile and unhelpful position that stands in contrast to the grace already at work through the Spirit in human existence. This position also stands in contrast to a theology of grace in the face of sin and evil of the ‘how much more’ of Christ’s resurrection life over death.

The comparison between Levine and Moltmann is that Levine’s approach to children’s cognition has shown the child’s ability to unify self and other simultaneously through metaphoric cognition. In a theological sense, Moltmann’s emphasis on the tensioned engagement between ‘like’ and ‘other’ (or between self and the other/s) has affirmed this unifying-across-difference in Levine’s approach.

The emphasis on the tensioned struggle of facing the other has spoken to more than a question of theodicy in both Moltmann’s theology and Ricoeur’s philosophy. It has pointed us to the human response of hope in the other/s as an anthropodicy. The question has turned, in other words, to what the cross asks humanity about its violence. Here, Moltmann and Ricoeur have shown the exuberant abundance of grace (the “how much more” of Romans 5:12-20) at work through the cross-resurrection as a surplus of God’s love to bring justice to the victims of violence.

Ricoeur, following Kant, has also taken up the idea of ‘other’ in an anthropodicy that does not ignore or explain away the ‘lament of the victims’. He too has pinpointed an implicit turn from the Grecian theoretical impassibility and disassociation to a response that cannot exclude the voices of lamentation. He opposes any system, theoretical or theological, which marginalizes the victims (by inference ‘the other/s’).

All three conversation partners have also shown similar moves away from the constraints of Grecian theoretical approaches to thinking and action. Levine and Ricoeur’s turns to a tensioned-struggled approach have shown a strong correlation with Moltmann’s tensioned-struggled process to the other/s in the cross-resurrection event. Ricoeur’s openness to a dynamic contingency within his discipline has informed a more profound way of doing life through the pathos, grace, and love that gives voice to the silenced, silent, rejected, unknown, excluded, and other/s. All three conversation partners have evoked the sense of a crucial openness to the other/s among us. They have thus spoken of both a natural and theological spirituality more endowed with the grace and love of accepting the other/s, the foreigner, the stranger, and the poor. The next chapter takes up the question of ‘doing’ with or for other/s as God’s embrace at the margins.

---

480 Moltmann, God for, 137.

481 Ricoeur, Figuring, 256. Also 250, “In fact, to do evil is always, either directly or indirectly, to make someone else suffer. In its dialogic structure evil committed by someone finds its other half in the evil suffered by someone else. It is at this major point of intersection that the cry of lamentation is most sharp.”
CHAPTER 4—Doing

Moltmann opens for us the focus of this chapter’s exploration on a doing with or for the other/s as follows,

But how can man, despite disappointment, suffering, and dying, remain in love? The God of theism is poor. He cannot suffer because he cannot love. Whoever believes in him becomes apathetic. The protesting atheist loves in a desperate way. He suffers because he loves, yet he protests against suffering and against love, and easily becomes hardened. Like Ivan Karamazov, he wants to give back his admission ticket to life. Faith that originates from the God-situation at the cross does not answer the question of suffering with a religious explanation of ‘why everything must be exactly as it is’, so that one simply submits to it. But neither does it harden into the mere gesture of protest which says that ‘everything as it is, is impermissible’. Rather, it leads protesting love back to its origin: ‘He who remains in love, remains in God and God in him’ (1 Jn. 4:17). Where people suffer because they love, God suffers in them and they suffer in God. Where this God suffers the death of Jesus and thereby demonstrates the power of his love, there people also find the power to remain in love despite pain and death, becoming neither bitter nor superficial. They gain the power of affliction and can hold fast to the dead.⁴⁸²

He writes further,

While the foundation of a society consisting of people who are like each other is normally the love of friends, the foundation of the society made up of the different is, if the worst comes to the worst, the love of enemies. To love our enemies means taking responsibility not just for ourselves and those who belong to us, but for our enemies too. We then no longer ask merely: how can we defend ourselves against our possible enemies? Our question now is: how can we take away their enmity, so that we can all survive together? In this sense, love of enemies is the foundation for a shared life in conflicts….⁴⁸³

The doing Moltmann refers to here is a move from just asking how things are to ask what they can become!⁴⁸⁴ The doing he proposes is an appeal to the Sermon on the Mount which calls for a unique way of relating with our enemies. In the book Creating a Just Future, Moltmann advocates for a love of enemy which is “not retributive love, but creative love.”⁴⁸⁵

It is not the idea of monarchy or of up-down social structures that correspond to the trinitarian God in perichoresis but the human community without privilege or subjugation.⁴⁸⁶ Building on the idea that the three Persons of the Trinity have everything in common except for their personal characteristics, Moltmann writes,

⁴⁸² Moltmann, Experiment, 82.
⁴⁸³ Moltmann, God for, 145.
⁴⁸⁴ Compare with Moltmann, God for, 147.
⁴⁸⁵ Moltmann, Creating, 43.
⁴⁸⁶ See Moltmann, Trinity, 198, “Seen in trinitarian terms, the life-giving Spirit, who confers on us the future and hope, does not proceed from any accumulation of power, or from the absolutist practice of lordship; he proceeds from the Father of Jesus Christ and from the resurrection of the Son. The resurrection through the life-quickening energy of the Holy Spirit is experienced, not at the spearheads of progress, but in the shadow of death.”
...the Trinity corresponds to a community in which people are defined through their relations with one another and in their significance for one another, not in opposition to one another, in terms of power and possession.\textsuperscript{487}

An exploration on what must we do with or for the other/s finds its source thus in the two loves recorded in Matthew 22:37-39: ‘to love the Lord your God and to love your neighbor as yourself.’ However, as I will engage below, Moltmann contends that these ‘two loves’ really are a ‘single love that experiences God and neighbor.’\textsuperscript{488} I am pursuing here, as the third leg of this study’s intersecting three-fold journey, responses for the sake of peace and justice through the question of ‘doing’. I am searching for the shape that a doing with or for the other/s may take. This chapter’s exploration does not prioritize an analysis of ecclesial and ethical praxes.\textsuperscript{489} To make more manageable such a broad topic as the ‘doing of love’ the explorations here stay centered instead on the ‘master metaphor of embrace’ as God’s love at the public margins according to the work of the trinitarian God through the cross-resurrection event.\textsuperscript{490}

The triune God’s embrace of the world in the agony of love opens to the idea and experience of the ‘will to embrace the other/s’ in the contours of human existence which I take up in the first main section of this chapter (4/1). The second section further delimits the doing of love as ‘embrace at the public margins’ (4/2). I engage here a turn to the public margins through the life, teaching, and ministry of Jesus

\textsuperscript{487} Moltmann, \textit{Trinity}, 198. Bauckham rebuts the charge of tritheism against Moltmann’s social Trinity in, \textit{Theology}, 24. See also the discussion in Joy Ann McDougall where she does not acquit Moltmann entirely, \textit{Pilgrimage of Love} (98, 158). See also chapter two (2/2/3, note 215).

\textsuperscript{488} Moltmann, \textit{Spirit}, 260. See section 4/1/2.

\textsuperscript{489} In-depth explorations of ecclesiology, discipleship, and ethics are beyond the scope of this study such as, for instance, Moltmann’s engagement of the role of discipleship through the life of Jesus in \textit{The Coming of God} (1996); a messianic ecclesiology in \textit{The Church in the Power of the Spirit} (1977), and an eschatological ethics in \textit{Ethics of Hope}, trans. by Margaret Kohl (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2012). I am taking up here Moltmann’s understanding of an ‘inclusive’ cosmic Christ as a ‘way and a moving forward’—as ‘Christ, always more and more’ in a new cosmic Christology that seeks the “discovery of the always greater Christ” as christocentric (not anthropocentric) and theocentric (not ecclesiocentric). As Moltmann adds (his emphases), “It is only the cosmic dimension which gives the human, historical experiences of Christ their all-embracing meaning. We can only think of Christ inclusively. Anyone who thinks of Christ exclusively, not for other people but against them, has not understood the Reconciler of the world. And yet a narrow, personally-centred and church-centred Christianity does exist, with its tragic incapacity to discover Christ in the cosmos—an incapacity which has made it guilty of destroying nature through its refusal to give help where help was needed” – \textit{Way}, 276.

\textsuperscript{490} I take the theological idea of ‘embrace’ to mean a ‘trinitarian doxological’ understanding of God. The idea of ‘embrace’ in this sense, 1) does not support Christian ethics and ecclesiology that in any way withholds justice from any person and to the creation. 2) differentiates itself from the oppressive, exploitative, inequitable or dominating use of power, and 3) allows, without presumption, for both ‘nearness’ and ‘distance’ in perichoresis (see Moltmann, \textit{Spirit}, 305). I qualify my use of ‘embrace’ here according to Kimberly Penner’s thesis on the abuse of power in a Mennonite community through the misapplication of the teachings of Matthew 18:15-18 – \textit{Discipleship as Erotic Peacemaking: Toward a Feminist Mennonite Theo-ethics of Embodiment and Sexuality} (Toronto School of Theology thesis repository, 2017), 58-70. Penner brings out the dangerous implications and applications of any theological idea (such as for this study’s purposes: the metaphor of ‘embrace’) that reinforces the public-private split and does not address the issue of power in communal relations. For instance, she singles out the consequences of turning socially-generated rules (gender, sexuality) into theological normative rules which has the effect of masking these socially generated attributes and making them part of the theological idea of ‘God’s image’ (Ibid, 70, 111; see also chapter two [2/15 and 2/2/1]). I have striven, in this study, to account for the important lessons taken up in Penner’s thesis and have tried to shape the idea of ‘embrace’ within the idea of humility through non-dominating justice for all. However, space does not allow for an in-depth exploration of the ethical implications in community of the wrong use of the idea and experience of embrace.
Christ in the gospels. 491 The focus here stays on the broad idea of the tensioned exuberant abundance of faith, hope, and love that the Christ-event has so far suggested to us. The explorations that follow thus continue the broad theme of the tensioned struggle in the Christ-event which gives life and shape to a Christlike response in a world of conflict and violence.

I will argue that how we see the Trinity, determines how we understand the work of God’s love as God’s embrace through the Spirit in humanity and creation. Moltmann takes up a theological path that connects the idea of God to the experience of the gospel in context. As noted above, Moltmann takes his starting point in a salvation-historical doctrine of the Trinity. 492 Following Moltmann here, I explore a social trinitarian theology of ‘embrace of the other/s in perichoresis’. 493

This chapter roots its exploration on doing through the ‘embrace’ aspect of a social trinitarian praxis revealed to us in the life, death, resurrection of Jesus Christ, and in the new-creational life of the Spirit of Christ. In the context of the social trinitarian theology of Moltmann, one cannot speak of the embrace of Christ on the cross outside the workings of the Spirit within Christ, or to separate it somehow from the co-instrumentality of the Spirit and the Father. In other words, when we speak of the divine embrace, we speak in the same breath of the trinitarian embrace of the creation seen through the trinitarian history of God. 494 The search here is thus for the connections between the Trinity’s charis and ‘doing’ as embrace through God’s fellowship in creative human energies. This two-fold connection also opens to the following explorations of Jesus’s life in his christomorphic journey of embrace with or for the other/s according to the gospels. As Moltmann writes,

God’s eternal Logos becomes a human body, a child in the manger, a saviour of the sick, a tortured human body on Golgotha. It is in this bodily form of Christ’s that God brings about the reconciliation of the world (Rom. 8.3). In his taking flesh, exploited, sick and shattered human bodies experience their healing and their indestructible dignity. The Christ dying in physical torment on the cross identifies himself with the sick, the tormented, and those who die in torment. That is why they are able to find in him the healing which is fellowship with God, the wellspring of eternal life. 495

491 The use of the word ‘public’ references the publicness and openness of Jesus’s theological actions and words but does not suggest that the idea of ‘margins’ excludes a ‘private’ world. All references to the ‘margins’ in this study take up the idea of a call to doing a ‘public theology’ in the world. In some sense also, what I am exploring is a reinvigorating of a ‘public theology’ for the sake of a world of peace and justice. This public theology shuns the idea that theology can defend itself, through a private-public split, from the truth that comes from the other/s. Melanie A. May, in “The Pleasure of Our Lives as Text: A New Rule of Christ for Anabaptist Women,” The Conrad Grebel Review, 10/1 (Winter 1992): 33-47, 36 (Quoted in Penner, Discipleship, 65), writes, “…my experience teaches me that if privacy is privileged, forgiveness may bottle up what an offense or abusive act stirs up. Forgiveness may function as the flip side of guilt and give in to the perpetrator’s cry for relief from responsibility.” Penner adds, “Thus, by privileging community, privacy, and forgiveness in these ways, Matthew 18 does not adequately address the ways in which power operates in individual, personal, communal, and social relationships within the community of faith and, as a result, ends up favouring the abuser rather than working for reconciliation through relationships of shared power and mutuality” — Ibid, 65.

492 See the explorations of the ‘two sides’ set out in chapter two (2/1/3).

493 See also the discussions in Moltmann, Experiences in, 303-331, where Moltmann takes up the idea of perichoresis in the ‘broad place of the Trinity’ as ‘the spatial experience of God’s indwelling’ in humanity and creation. Wolf takes up Moltmann’s approach in, After, 208-211. Both authors, draw a clear line between the divine and the human in the idea of perichoresis which we explore here through the master-metaphor of ‘embrace’ as noted above.

494 See Moltmann, Way, 74.

495 Moltmann, God in, 245-246.
Our explorations here of this ‘fellowship of God’s love as an embrace’ through Christ’s life, continues the work of the preceding chapters—that contrasted the questions of hierarchy and rank and priority to the call to servanthood and humility. Jesus’s recorded repeated use of the example of the child (and children) continues to implicitly frame the idea and experience of doing with or for the other/s in Christlike humility as both a childlike and courageous humility.\textsuperscript{496} The idea of Jesus’s humility in his doing with or for the other/s also speaks to Moltmann’s theology of the cross.

God’s doing through the agony of love on the cross here enables the human response of doing God’s love and mercy and grace for humanity and creation. Moltmann brings up the ingredients here, in the actions of Jesus’s embrace of the world, the doing of God’s love. It is this embrace of love and mercy that enables thus a greater seeing and knowing and hoping as a reflection not of self only but of the Other—the trinitarian God in perichoretic unity-across-difference. Simply put, to understand God’s ‘loving embrace’ one must look at the triune God. Furthermore, any reflection of this divine attribute in human energies must also take its reference always in the triune God’s perichoretic embrace which we see in the Christ-event. Any human action of love that takes its source in this kind of ‘embrace of love’ in the Christ-event cannot then justify human actions that dishonor, disadvantage, disrespect, un-dignify, abuse, control, dominate, or victimize the other/s as human or creational.

Moltmann also argues for a doing as a social trinitarian doxology which he describes as the place where ‘the beatific vision’ of seeing God ‘face to face’ can begin.\textsuperscript{497} Doing as loving embrace with or for the other/s here brings into view the idea and experience of ‘open friendship’ with Other—God, and through God, with or for the other/s.\textsuperscript{498} The idea of ‘friendship’ gives shape in creative human energies to a social trinitarian experience of God. As noted above, living as humans in analogia relationis means to indwell the ‘life-giving ambience of the Spirit’ (to use Volf’s term). Living in the ‘life-giving ambience of the Spirit’ means to live in intimate friendship with the Spirit of Christ but not as ‘indwelling the person of the Spirit’.\textsuperscript{499} “A friend” Moltmann argues, “is someone who likes you.”\textsuperscript{500} Moltmann takes up this idea of ‘friendship’ as a social trinitarian doxology of loving God for God’s own sake and not only loving God

\textsuperscript{496} The reference here is primarily to Matthew 18:1-5.
\textsuperscript{497} Moltmann, History, 69. I take up with Moltmann here a theological approach that goes beyond the monarchial, historical and eucharistic concepts of the Trinity. This approach is one that unites all three in a ‘trinitarian doxology’ as a trinitarian perichoretic movement from below and from above and forward toward to the eschaton. See Spirit, 289-306.
\textsuperscript{498} This study’s use of the word ‘for’ in the context of ‘doing’ does not imply a ‘superior’ or ‘imperial’ source, or any subjugation or invasion or imposition or advantage over or of the other/s. ‘For’ denotes only the opening of and desire and willingness to turn to the other/s to love according to the commandments of the two loves in Matthew 22:37-39. ‘For’ here expresses an act of justice and peace. ‘For’, in this sense also, takes up a willingness to embrace the other/s without any presumption and condition of response as seen in the testimony of Jesus Christ. It is the free choice of giving out, gift, gift through valuing the other/s and dignifying the other/s. ‘For’ also here articulates the choice of ‘self-loss’ for the betterment and advantage of the other/s.
\textsuperscript{499} See Volf, After, 211
\textsuperscript{500} Moltmann, Spirit, 255.
for God’s loving acts in humanity and creation.\textsuperscript{501} I will explore further developments of the idea and experience of ‘open friendship’ in public theology in \textit{chapter five} (5/3/2). Moltmann references here the recorded words of Jesus who said to the disciples,

This is my command: Love one another, as I have loved you. No one has greater love than this, that one lays down his life for the sake of his friends. … This is my command to you: Love one another.\textsuperscript{502}

In the cross, this new \textit{doing} with or for ‘other’ is, as we have shown, synonymous to a ‘love unto death.’ Moltmann takes us to the idea that Jesus shapes for humanity an ‘open friendship’ which through death on the cross is “presented as love for his friends.”\textsuperscript{503} “God is love” is shown through Jesus as the God who is humble in love and a friend to ‘embrace’ the broken, humanity, the poor, the sinner, and the ‘outcast.’\textsuperscript{504} However, what does this ‘doing’ of love in death look like as an embrace of the other/s in human and creational contours? Moltmann writes,

The glory of the triune God is reflected, not in the crowns of kings and the triumphs of victors, but in the face of the crucified Jesus, and in the faces of the oppressed whose brother he became. He is the one visible image of the invisible God. The glory of the triune God is also reflected in the community of Christ: in the fellowship of believers and of the poor.\textsuperscript{505}

Moltmann here sees the love of the marginal, poor, and outcast as ‘the fellowship of believers’. He sets up for us the symbol of the cross of Christ as ‘\textit{doing}’ through the metaphor of a willingness to embrace the other/s in humility and service. ‘Embrace’ here takes up the concept of ‘hospitality’ and the Pauline call spoken admittedly to the church which met in Rome to ‘welcome one another’ as Christ had welcomed them for God’s glory.\textsuperscript{506} The ‘embrace’ then might be an attitude of humility or a humbling of ourselves as a turn toward the ‘marginalized’—like the poor, the forsaken, the victims, the hungry, the forgotten, the silenced, the abused, the little, the orphans, and the widows.\textsuperscript{507}

We might also understand this kind of ‘doing’ of God’s love as \textit{trinitarian doxological embrace} through the triune God in human and creational contours. With Moltmann, the embrace of the Trinity in

\textsuperscript{501} A discussion of Richard Bauckham’s critique of a too subjective theology of the Spirit in Moltmann’s pneumatological christology is beyond the purview of this study. For Bauckham, the Holy Spirit is limited to indwelling ‘man’ and is not understood as ‘Subject’ or worshipped for its own sake – see \textit{Theology}, 163f. From what I understand of Moltmann’s social trinitarian theology, I take up an understanding of the Holy Spirit in the sense of a \textit{plerarý genítive}. In other words, in the ‘tension’ of both the Holy Spirit’s subjective-genitive attribute (ἐν ὑμῖν) and objective-genitive attribute (ἐπὶ ὑμῖν). See the exegetical comparisons of John 14:16-19 and 1 John 4:16 to Romans 5:5. See also the comments in Beasley-Murray, \textit{John}, WBC 36; Accordance electronic ed. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1987), 257-258, and Hall-Harris (2005, NET Notes on Romans 5:5), n.p.

\textsuperscript{502} John 15:12-17. Translated by Beasley-Murray, \textit{John}, 266.

\textsuperscript{503} Moltmann, \textit{Spirit}, 258.

\textsuperscript{504} See 1 John 4:16; compare to James 2:23.

\textsuperscript{505} Moltmann, \textit{Trinity}, 197-198.

\textsuperscript{506} See Romans 15:7.

\textsuperscript{507} I take up with Moltmann the idea of ‘marginalization’ in the negative sense of its meaning (such as in the ‘marginalization’ of peoples, cultures, and creation through domination). Moltmann is against the “…repression of differences between races, peoples and sexes [which means] identity in recognition by others and the recognition of others in their own identity” – see \textit{The Future of Creation}, trans. by Margaret Kohl (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress Press, 1979), 111.
the Christ-event opens to a trinitarian doxology of both adoring God for himself and being filled by the Spirit to a ‘doing’ of God’s love with or for the other/s.⁵⁰⁸ The scriptural witness also shows that Jesus prioritizes this kind of embrace as an embrace of the poor, the naked, the thirsty, and the imprisoned.⁵⁰⁹ Jesus’s recorded actions and sayings show us that he does not objectify the other/s (poor, imprisoned) but refers to himself as them (“For I was hungry…, I was thirsty…, I was a stranger…, I was naked…, I was sick…, I was in prison”). We take this to mean that the embrace of the poor and the imprisoned is the embrace we give to the triune God.

Moltmann’s relational emphasis likewise articulates a more profound embrace made known in the doctrine of the Trinity as the ‘true theological doctrine of freedom’.⁵¹⁰ He reverses the idea of a ‘dominating’ God in favor of a triune God who is not ‘almighty power’ but who is love and who is present in compassion and mercy, “It is his passionate, possible love that is almighty, nothing else.”⁵¹¹ How then might Jesus’s embrace of the other/s seen as at the public margins of his context inform our view of the actions of God’s love at the contemporary ‘public margins’ for the sake of peace and justice? How might this ‘humble love’ make a proper place for both the work of forgiveness and justice? How might an understanding of God’s love in ‘open friendship’ inform our embrace of the other/s for the sake of justice and peace in the world?

Moltmann makes the point that in our encounter with the other we learn through the Spirit to subject ourselves to the “pains and joys of our own alteration.”⁵¹² Moltmann here takes up the point of ‘alteration’ as not only adapting to the other/s but finding the tensioned struggle and joy and empathy of entering into a ‘doing’ in relation with or for the other/s. As noted, both Levine and Ricoeur similarly imply that entering a doing with or for the other/s cannot presume its acceptance by the other/s.⁵¹³ ‘Embrace’ cannot assume a response from other. It cannot obstruct the painful work of justice for victims of violence. It cannot superficially absolve the causes of that violence. It cannot ignore the protests of history.

As Volf also shows, this turn of ‘doing’ toward the other/s does not propose a ‘soft mercy’ that tampers with ‘harsh justice’, it is “a love shaping the very content of justice.”⁵¹⁴ Volf argues for this turn of ‘doing’

---

⁵⁰⁸ See Moltmann, Spirit, 301-305.
⁵⁰⁹ See Matthew 25:35-40.
⁵¹⁰ Moltmann, Trinity, 192. See also chapter three (3/2), and Trinity, 212-222.
⁵¹¹ Moltmann, Trinity, 197. See also Richard Bauckham’s critique of Moltmann’s ‘too easy equation of power to dominance’ and by which according to Bauckham, Moltmann misses the exploration of how “power can be based on consent, exercised in love, and directed to fostering, rather than suppressing, freedom and responsibility” – see Theology, 145. We might see Moltmann’s equation of power to domination through his concern for the human condition and his assessment of the evidence of history. According to him, he cannot not so much protest what is evident in its consequence for the future of the world. He offers the possibility of a hermeneutical turn toward the cross-resurrection for a response to all structures of power as well as for a response to and for all the oppressed. All of life is thus not beyond the cross-resurrection but must find their bearings in that one cosmic event (of double dimension). He does not reject the element of power as a benefit in human existence but advocates a caution. See, for instance, his discussion on the legitimation of resistance against tyrannical authority, racism, and the aspect of violence in the context of love in Experiment, 131-146.
⁵¹² Moltmann, God for, 145.
⁵¹³ See chapter three (3/1-3/2).
⁵¹⁴ Volf, Exclusion, 220.
with or for the other/s that presupposes a qualified embrace without which there could not be forgiveness or healing and justice.

We cannot deny that from a kerygmatic perspective the epitome of a doing with or for the other/s is Christ’s cross as seen in the light of the exuberant-abundant hope in the resurrection. Here the act of Christ crucified as ‘other’ (rejected, despised, hated) makes possible the reconciliation with and between humans. Also, the power of Christ’s grace declares an embrace of the whole of humanity without demand or manipulation and without dishonoring and abrogating the distance between self and the other/s. However, also, between the abyssal pain and rejection of the cross and the power and acceptance of the resurrection lives the whole of humanity and creation with their contradictions and their correspondences. In a meaningful sense, therefore, we must continue here to explore the idea that in doing with or for the other/s we cannot reach beyond this tensioned struggle. So, through the tensioned struggle, we must find and understand what it is to be willing to embrace the other/s for the sake of God’s love.

This idea of ‘trinitarian doxological embrace’ suggests the need for an examination in our human energies of Jesus’s humble ‘doing of love’ or embrace with or for the other/s. The next section takes up an interanimative discourse between Moltmann social trinitarian doxology and Volf’s theology of embrace (4/1). A section then follows that explores aspects of this doing as a trinitarian embrace at the ‘public margins’ and the work of christomorphic ‘humble love’ with or for the other/s in the gospels (4/2). The chapter closes with assessments (4/3).

4/1—An Interanimative Exploration of a Theology of Embrace in Moltmann and Volf

This section gives priority to a more detailed exploration of a theology of embrace through a conversation with Moltmann and Volf. Given the current realities of continuing violence, an exploration of Moltmann and Volf’s ‘theology of embrace’ may provide responses in our doing with or for the other/s for the sake of a world of peace and justice and for informing a public discourse of peace and justice.515

Volf was Moltmann’s student between 1980 and 1989. They have kept both a close association and similar theological ideas. Relevant to this exploration, Volf draws significantly on Moltmann’s theological themes in several ways. He draws on the themes of suffering and the other; Moltmann’s social trinitarian theology; faith in Christ’s incarnation, death, and resurrection; the pneumatological-christology of a non-violent God, and God’s passibility. He also draws on Moltmann’s liberation theology; justification and sanctification; a public and political theology; divine continuity through a ‘burden’ of the cross; a non-rejective view of secularization, and a humanized eschatological gospel of God’s “openness” for the whole creation.

---

515 This section’s explorations do not include a discussion of Volf’s social trinitarian ecclesiology (After our Likeness) or eschatology (the latter chapters of Part Two of Exclusion & Embrace).
This section focuses on Moltmann and Volf’s social trinitarian theologies of the cross and resurrection through aspects of a ‘divine embrace.’ I explore the element of ‘embrace’ here as doing with or for the other/s through first, the ‘embrace of the other/s’ in Moltmann’s social trinitarian theology as an embrace of suffering in the turn to the other/s, and second, Volf’s development of the embrace of the perpetrator. The embrace of suffering in Moltmann is itself an embrace of the other, and both are what Volf draws from to develop the embrace of the perpetrator who suffers from the lack of forgiveness and because of guilt. The following explorations with Volf will refer only to those aspects of Moltmann’s theology that relate to Volf’s theology of embrace.

My struggles to integrate as a French Catholic immigrant to South Africa in the 60s and 70s, and the effect on my life of its socio-political conflicts, has motivated my interest in the aspect of embrace. An old African proverb, taken up by Willem Saayman my early mentor in missiology and systematic theology, states: “No single individual can embrace the baobab tree.” This proverb implicitly informs the call to all for wisdom that may produce through the Spirit a unity-across-diversity in the public margins of today.

For Moltmann, the idea of embrace within social trinitarian theology arguably takes a decisive turn through Dietrich Bonhoeffer’s writings in prison. Both Moltmann and Volf draw from the example of Bonhoeffer’s life who offers in his response to the abuses of Nazi Germany an understanding of a doing with or for the other/s in a violent political cauldron. Bonhoeffer’s sacrifice at the hands of the Nazis and also countless others among the Jewish people and those of different cultures and faiths who were brutally killed stands as a theological transitory point. I use this point of transition here as a kind of pivot to how we might understand the ‘embrace’ in a ‘doing for the other/s’ beneficial to actions of peace and justice today. We might say, therefore, that Bonhoeffer in his later theology foreshadows the Christocentric elements of a theology of embrace taken up in Moltmann and Volf’s social trinitarian theology. In a letter he wrote on July 21, 1944, he affirms the extent of that embrace of the world for all called through the cross of Christ to a relevant and public faith. He writes,

[it is] only by living completely in this world that one learns to have faith. … In so doing we throw ourselves completely into the arms of God, taking seriously, not our own sufferings, but those of God in the world – watching with Christ in Gethsemane.

---

516 I take the meaning of metaphor of embrace from Miroslav Volf’s description in Exclusion, 28-29. ‘Embrace’ is a ‘welcome to the other’ (Romans 15:7) that reflects different elements in different contexts. What one culture considers proper another may not. Embrace does not imply a ‘connection’ made that excludes willing and complete acceptance of it. Volf employs the metaphor of embrace to highlight various aspects of the work of Christ on the cross. He also differentiates between ‘undiscriminated embrace’ (or indiscriminate) and the ‘will to embrace’ (or ‘discriminated embrace’).

517 Moltmann, God for, 138-140.

518 Volf, Exclusion, 23.


523 Bonhoeffer, Letters, 369-370.
However, also, the circumstances of Bonhoeffer’s death at the hands of the Nazis directly informs the question of his response to perpetrators of injustice and violence. He exercises the command to ‘love’ here with discerning action. Bonhoeffer recognized the evil at work in abusive political and social power. The abuse of power, not limited to secular national institutions, also devastates the innocent and vulnerable within social secular and religious communities. For example, Penner describes the ‘use and abuse of ecclesial power’ committed against women, the LGBQTIA (or GSRM), the vulnerable, the innocent, and children. Quoting Shawn Copeland’s *Enfleshing Freedom*, she writes, “Feminist and womanist theological anthropologies claim that ‘any appeal to the empirical or visual in the effort to understand human being is never innocent, never ahistorical, and never divorced from power’.”

Penner highlights for us here the critical qualifications that we must consider, acknowledge, and apply in any comparison made between Jesus’s embrace of the other/s on the cross, and any idea of embrace in human contours. I am searching here for an understanding of ‘embrace’ as a metaphor for living in the energies of the Holy Spirit of the resurrection. I wish, therefore, to take my reference for ‘embrace’ from the One who embraces according to the cross-resurrection event. This kind of embrace in and through the cross informs all ensuing human actions that hope for a world of peace and justice. This kind of embrace makes room for Bonhoeffer’s resistance against evil. This kind of embrace makes room for a militant resistance against social, political, and economic abuses committed against the children, the disadvantaged, and the poor. We may think here of the poor in the Latin-speaking world and elsewhere, or the victims of war and violence such as the Rohingyas, etc. God’s embrace according to the Christ-event rises in defense of the silent and the weak, and against those who would do them harm. This kind of embrace cannot itself remain silent or passive in the face of a world of violence. This kind of embrace does not define sin simply in terms of theological and ecclesiological interpretations and doctrines if those interpretations and doctrines in any way act in injustice against anyone and creation. However, this kind of embrace is merciful to the weak and the sinner and the perpetrator. This kind of embrace keeps an ongoing tension in the energies of the Holy Spirit of the resurrection. It holds this ongoing tension between the wonder of God’s love and presence, and the wisdom of the Spirit at work in human responses for peace and justice.

We might thus see also that Bonhoeffer’s actions (in his militant resistance to the Nazi leadership, as in his mercy toward his jail guards) continue to bridge the decades to inform our ‘doing’ as an embrace of the other/s in the publics today. His affirmation continues for us in this chapter the aspect of a doing with or for the other/s. He gives us an example of following Jesus Christ’s refusal to be silent in his opposition to economic abuses (reference his overturning of the money changers tables recorded in Matthew 21:12, Mark 11:15, and John 2:14-15); his defense of the accused, poor, sick, abused, and marginalized, and in his self-emptying embrace of the other/s at the center of humanity and creation.

---

524 Penner, *Discipleship*, 110.
Bonhoeffer thus sets up the later explorations on a theology of doing as an embrace of and with the other/s at the public margins (see section 4/2). His ‘watching with Christ’ shows us the call to embrace the other/s and the call to identify that embrace with the sufferings of Christ in the world—with the pains and joys that that entails.

However, how does Moltmann and Volf’s public social trinitarian theology make effective this ‘embrace’? In Moltmann’s social trinitarian theology ‘the whole Trinity’ leads beyond but not excluding what is only “…caught up in the movement toward self-surrender, which in the passion of Christ reaches lost men and women and is revealed to them.”\(^{525}\) Moltmann points to a trinitarian doxological movement of embrace that is beyond the monarchial, eucharistic and historical as a doing of God’s love.\(^{526}\) The metaphor of embrace here opens to an embrace of God as God worshipped and glorified for God’s own sake.\(^{527}\) How then does Moltmann and Volf’s social trinitarian theology reflect this space created by God for the embrace of the other/s?

I have so far journeyed with Moltmann’s *embrace of suffering and otherness* which gives predominant attention to the poor and victims at the margins. We now turn to an exploration of Volf’s drama of embrace and how it might inform an *embrace of the perpetrator* with all the qualifications that this entails. Section 4/1/1 begins with an exploration of Volf’s theology of the cross with emphasis on the embrace of the perpetrator. Section 4/1/2 goes on to detail some aspects of Moltmann’s social trinitarian theology of embrace relevant to our discussion with Volf. A section then follows that discusses Volf’s *embrace of the perpetrator* in relation to Moltmann’s *embrace of the victim* (4/1/3).

4/1/1—The Cross’s Embrace of Perpetrator in Volf

At a lecture in 1993 about ‘embracing’ our enemies as Christ had embraced humanity and creation through the cross, Jürgen Moltmann asked Miroslav Volf if he could embrace a Cetnik? Volf asked himself: what would it do to his identity as a Croat to embrace those who had herded his people into concentration camps, raped the women, and burned down their churches and cities? Both the blood of the innocent and of Christ cried out to him, and he could betray neither if the cross of Christ was to be real to him. What was he to say to the abused and angry Croat? He writes, “I felt caught between two betrayals—the betrayal of the suffering, exploited, and excluded, and the betrayal of the very core of my faith.”\(^{528}\)

The cross introduces the pain of suffering into the understanding of public theology in the contemporary world. Here was a divine embrace that would allow Volf no retreat to private sanctity or shallow response. The weight on the human soul of the horror of abuse is not so easy to unburden. If reasoned away it returns vigorously to trouble us and to claw at the fabric of our sanity and our peace.

---

525 See chapter two (2/2/3); *Way*, 178; *Spirit*, 301-306.  
526 Moltmann, *Experiences in*, 143.  
527 See Moltmann, *Spirit*, 301.  
How then is the cross to do its redemptive and healing work in the face of abuses too awful to recount? Volf saw that he could not limit the work of the cross to the victim but to see it at work in the perpetrator and to heal him also. As he describes it, here stood for him the central motivation for his development of a trinitarian theology of the cross that goes beyond and yet does not exclude a theology of embrace for the victims; the poor, and the disenfranchised who exist ‘at the margins’ of the world. Moltmann had already begun to push beyond (but not excluding) his primary theme of solidarity in a cross for victims in his book The Spirit of Life (1991) by supplementing it as Volf observes, with “the theme of atonement for the perpetrators.”

There seems in Volf here the developing sense that God’s passibility through the cross, to be effective in a contemporary world, needed to address the increasing cultural schisms forming within national boundaries. Drawing on Charles Taylor’s ‘politics of difference’ Volf sought a path for a social trinitarian theology that could be confronted with a new kind of perpetrator—one much closer to ‘home’. His concern in the climate of violence (which can so mercilessly abrogate ‘identity and difference’) was to find a different theological solution for the problem of the continuing assertions of “tribal” identity where “cultural heterogeneity is combined with extreme imbalances of power and wealth.” In other words, we must show the cross’s embrace to reach and cover the increasing evidence of “ghettos and battlefields throughout the world—in the living rooms, in inner cities, or on the mountain ranges.”

Volf saw these ‘ghettos and battlefields’ as developments tied closely to the increasing disparity between rich and poor occurring within national boundaries as well as elsewhere in most of the contemporary world. I note here that the ‘rich and poor’ also inscribe (or, imprint) on ‘power and powerless’ though it is not always the case when it comes to the intersectionality of the marginalized. This ‘inscribing’ becomes more acute where ‘majority and minority’ and ‘religious cultures’ are concerned. This ‘inscribing’ would also suggest for future research, further developments of Volf’s thesis to address social, political, economic, and cultural (global and local) instances of intersectionality.

The world is undergoing massive social, economic, and political transition. Technological change contrary to expectations has not halted but worsened the ecological crisis through depleting natural resources and contributing to the ‘scandal’ of continuing poverty in the world. As Volf puts it,

The gap between the overfed rich and the overworked, underpaid, and malnourished poor — ‘the crucified people’ — is enlarging. There are also deep rifts between people of different genders, cultures, races, and religions; multiple forms of interesting and overlapping oppressions sometimes

---

530 Volf, Exclusion, 9-10.
532 Volf, Exclusion, 20.
533 Volf, Exclusion, 20.
534 I refer here also to ‘cultural, or other forms, of imprinting’ as events of choice and action that shape personal, social, and political reality through such aspects as an exercise of power, a lack of power, inclusion, alienation, exclusion, etc.
lead to brutal domestic, national, and international conflicts that leave behind rivers of blood and mountains of corpses.\textsuperscript{535}

What are the questions then that theology ought to be asking, and how does that speak to our search here through a ‘theology of embrace’ for responses to a world of peace? Volf puts the question in this way,

On which of these problems ought theology to focus its attention? Gender? Race? Poverty? Ecological survival? All four together? Do these problems singly or together require a radical rethinking of classical Christian perspectives on God, humanity, and the world, or would attempts at minor adjustments or even the simple retrieval of genuine Christian tradition be more appropriate? Ought theology to be primarily ‘issue oriented’ at all, or does it not thereby lose one of its most important functions, namely, its overarching perspective on the one world in the name of the God of all peoples? Is a singular concentration on issues a diversion from theology’s most proper theme — God — or a necessary consequence of the most basic theological insight that the love of God and of neighbor are inseparable and that the love of God is only real in the love of the neighbor?\textsuperscript{536}

Volf’s theology here carries a concern that tries to reflect the realities of a modernizing world and the increasing “God-crisis” within it. Moreover, he and Moltmann continue to find their responses to these questions within a social trinitarian theology of the embrace of the other/s in the two loves of Matthew 22:37-39. The resurrection with the cross of Christ at its center makes known these two loves. To both Volf and Moltmann, the Trinity’s self-giving love manifests on and through the cross. However, to Volf, the overarching ‘divine embrace’ in self-donation on the cross needs to include and go beyond the work of solidarity of Moltmann’s “suffering God” who suffers with his creation. Before entering further into Volf’s development of the cross’s embrace of the perpetrator, a brief laying out of the aspects of Moltmann’s social trinitarian theology of embrace is necessary to set up the discussion with Volf.

\textbf{4/12—Moltmann’s Social Trinitarian Theology of Embrace}

The waning optimism of the 60s, the building of the Berlin wall, the Cold War, and the Paris, Berlin, Berkeley, and Tokyo student riots, among others, is the fuel that gave rise to a more central focus on an eschatological christology in Moltmann’s later theology. The increasingly globalized Western world and the modern era was asking what they owed to the biblical traditions. Moltmann may have felt that his theology of hope had failed to ground theology in a more ‘solid human hope.’ He looked thus to affirm the centrality of the cross within his theology of hope in God where the triune God is the living space and corresponding eternal relation intended for the whole creation. God opens the passage for the creation through God’s embrace of the world in suffering, and for the suffering world. In \textit{The Crucified God} (1973) and \textit{Trinity and the Kingdom} (1980), Moltmann develops the resulting embrace of ‘world in God’. He takes up in these books a christology and social trinitarian theology of not only the creation’s redemption as community with God but as participant in the ‘inner-trinitarian’ life in God. To reiterate, I am here recapping developments through the idea and experience of embrace in the human-divine relation in

\textsuperscript{535} Volf, \textit{Exclusion}, xi.
\textsuperscript{536} Volf, “Introduction,” xi-xii.
Moltmann’s theology.\textsuperscript{537} It is crucial to note here that in Moltmann’s idea of embrace resides the aspect of ‘distance’ as he argues, “Every wondering admiration requires not merely the embrace but also the distance, so that we can look the other in the eyes, face to face.”\textsuperscript{538}

As I understand it, the idea of embrace as ‘world in God’ in Moltmann’s theology turned after the book \textit{Trinity and the Kingdom} (1980) to give greater emphasis to the aspect of embrace as ‘God in world’. The books \textit{God in Creation} (1985) and \textit{The Coming of God} (1996) reflect this change. Drawing on such scriptures as Isaiah 6:3 (“And one called to another and said: ‘Holy! Holy! Holy! YHWH of Hosts! The fullness of all the earth (is) his glory!’”), Moltmann develops his view here toward a non-exclusive emphasis of the Trinity’s embrace of the world who glorifies itself in redeeming history and in bringing the world to consummation. He takes up through 1 John 4:16 the words, “God is love; and the person who is living in love remains in God, and God in him” which according to Smalley and Schnackenburg forms the high point of John’s contemplation of God.\textsuperscript{540} Moltmann here describes the embrace of the Trinity as the world finding ‘space in the triune God in a worldly way’ when the triune God ‘indwells the world in a divine way’.\textsuperscript{541} He explains this embrace as, “In loving, the lovers are \textit{counterpart and presence} for one another. The inclination of the Thou awakens a responding movement in the I, and vice versa.”\textsuperscript{542}

Moltmann’s theology of embrace here \textit{opposes} the cleavage between the \textit{experience of God} and the \textit{experience of love}. He argues that just as according to 1 John 4:6 it is a ‘single love that experiences God and neighbor’ so in Matthew 22:37-39 it is a ‘single love which embraces God and neighbor’.\textsuperscript{543} He opens the idea of embrace to a pneumatological christology of ‘open friendship’ between self and other, known and unknown, and between people who are the same and people who are different. I will discuss this pneumatological-christological embrace below through the examples of Jesus’s life recorded in the gospels (4/2/1-4/2/3).

However, for Moltmann, the social trinitarian embrace in open friendship makes no sense outside his theology of the cross. He writes, “If the theologians and philosophers of the future do not plant their feet on the ground and turn to a theology of the cross … they will disappear in a cloud of liberal optimism and appear a mockery of the present misery of the suffering.”\textsuperscript{544}

\begin{footnotes}
\item[537] See the first paragraphs and notes above.
\item[538] Moltmann, \textit{Spirit}, 305.
\item[540] Translation by Smalley, \textit{1, 2, 3 John}, 233. Comments on, 254. See also the discussion in \textit{chapter two} (2/1/5).
\item[541] See Moltmann, “The World,” 41.
\item[542] Moltmann, \textit{Spirit}, 262.
\end{footnotes}
God enters thus into human suffering as the antidote to its violent condition. Moltmann writes, “God takes man so seriously that he suffers under the actions of man and can be injured by them.”

Moltmann shows the total association of God, to God’s embrace of humankind as “the victim in the victims.” He sees a central cross that seeks justice, solidarity, and equality for the peoples of the world, since, in suffering, Christ identifies with the sufferers of the world. The centrality of the cross recovers decentered humanity. Moltmann thus distances himself from elements of theological triumphalism, millenarianism, and Utopian hope. He leaves behind “Western anthropocentrism,” and highlights the close association of the cross to a hope in the other in ecology and in creation that is rooted in its doing of love with or for the other/s. The restoration of the idea of endurance with Christ is only possible through the mutual suffering of the cross. In short, Western technological and economic and political dominance in their various forms meet their opposition in Christ’s cross, and solidarity comes through Christ as “life-giving Spirit.” In this sense, it is not in human strength that God’s grace raises humanity and creation up, but in its weakness. It is the triune God who awakens the means thus for a political justice against injustice, violence, and inhumanity. Moltmann describes this work of the Spirit as, “The rebirth of modernity out of the Suffering of life.”

The Spirit of Christ through the cross is thus a Spirit of messianic hope. We might see that without the embrace of the cross, the actualizing of Christ in the now ‘loses’ or ‘ignores’ God’s suffering hope in the future. Moltmann quotes an old Greek saying here that says, ‘to know God means to suffer God’ which also speaks to Bonhoeffer’s counterpart claim that ‘only a suffering God can help.’

The embrace of the cross, therefore, goes beyond what Christ does for us. This kind of embrace enables even the hiding of God in Bonhoeffer’s ‘obscurity’—in the experience of forsakenness recorded for us in Christ’s cry on the cross (‘My God, why have you forsaken me”). It is crucial in the understanding of Moltmann’s perichoretic view of the Trinity to see this ‘obscurity’ not as the Father’s abandonment of Christ. We should see this ‘obscurity’ as Christ’s experience in the Trinity of a “God-forsakenness” that shows God’s endurance of suffering in love’s embrace of the other/s. In this sense also, Christ’s embrace of suffering brings into view the realities of a contemporary world’s public expression of hope. Viewed

545 Moltmann, Crucified, 271.
546 Moltmann, God for, 19.
547 Moltmann, God for, 18.
548 Moltmann joins together the pacifist elements of Anabaptist theology (using the ‘plowshare’) to the Calvinist transformative reform (swords into plowshares) and the Lutheran Christian life of responsibility. I follow his qualified ‘pacifist,’ ‘non-imperial,’ and ‘liberationist preferential option active resistance theme’ for relevant public theology that stands against evidences of human evil, injustices, and inhumanity, such as in human rights abuses against the Rohingyas, and in other genocidal behaviors, as well as in abuses against ecology. These and so many other acts committed against the dignity of the human and creation should break our hearts with grief and sorrow and awaken us to action with or for the other/s. See Ethics, 204-206. See also the discussion on ‘racism and the right to resist’ in Experiment, 131-146.
549 Moltmann, God for, 17. Also Ibid, 66-70.
550 Moltmann, God for, 148.
551 Matthew 27:46 NET.
this way, the embrace of the cross sounds out the songs of hope for all the disadvantaged, poor, abused, excluded, and for those who live at the margins.

These ideas also open for us the next section’s interanimative exploration of the relationship between Volf’s ‘embrace of the perpetrator’ and Moltmann’s ‘embrace of the victim’.

4/1/3—Volf’s Embrace of the Perpetrator in Conversation with Moltmann’s Embrace of the Victim

As noted above, Volf’s turn to the other explores a nuanced development of Moltmann’s later theology of the cross’s embrace laid out in Spirit of Life (1991).⁵⁵² Volf admits to an ‘embrace of the perpetrator’ that is almost Nietzschean. He proposes the other side of Nietzsche’s negative argument—in other words, a positive side made saner by the centrality of the “wisdom of the cross.”⁵⁵³ Here, the ‘will to embrace’ waits on justice’s “demand”. We might say that this ‘will to embrace’ extends beyond (but not excluding) Moltmann’s primary focus on solidarity. Volf moves here toward an asymmetrical tensioned struggle between the “grace of self-donation and the demand of truth and justice.”⁵⁵⁴ God’s suffering through his indiscriminate will to embrace humankind on the cross makes the struggle against the world’s political and economic problems a critical consideration. Volf writes,

As I stress the priority of the ‘will to embrace’, my assumption is that the struggle against deception, injustice, and violence is indispensable. But how should this struggle take place? How should ‘truth’ and ‘justice’ be identified?⁵⁵⁵

Volf here roots the struggle in a self-giving love on the cross.⁵⁵⁶ However, is he hindering the inescapable differentiation between the actions of the God in the cross and the symbols of that embrace taken up in creative human energies? Are Volf’s victims called to forgiveness in a way that places the onus on them to choose peace? Alternatively, does Volf take up a divine grace for victims that allows them to stay in ‘unforgiveness’? Volf’s turn to the perpetrator brings into focus here my question of the ‘wisdom’ or ‘ongoing necessary tension of both forgiving and not forgiving’ illustrated in the Jesus-saying to the disciples recorded in John 20:21b-23:

‘Peace to you! As the Father has sent me, I also am sending you.’ And after saying this he breathed into them and said to them, ‘Receive (the) Holy Spirit. Whoever’s sins you forgive they stand forgiven them; whoever’s sin you hold back, they remain held back’.⁵⁵⁷

---

⁵⁵² See Moltmann, Spirit, 129-131 (justice for victims), 132-138 (atonement or expiation for perpetrators), 142-143 (Spirit as judge).
⁵⁵³ Volf, Exclusion, 29.
⁵⁵⁴ Volf, Exclusion, 29.
⁵⁵⁵ Volf, Exclusion, 29.
⁵⁵⁶ Volf, Exclusion, 25.
⁵⁵⁷ Translation by Beasley-Murray, John, 365.
The context, here according to the parallel account in Luke 24:36-42 of the disciples hiding behind ‘locked doors’ in fear of reprisals, brings into view the import of Jesus’s words who inscribes as it were, a ‘tension in forgiveness’. However, also, the Jesus-sayings of Matthew 6:12-15 (the so-called ‘Lord’s Prayer’) holds up another end of the ongoing ‘tension of forgiveness’ as follows:

And forgive us our offenses as we ourselves also have forgiven those who offend us. And do not bring us into testing but deliver us from the Evil One. For if you forgive other people’s sins, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive others, neither will your Father forgive your sins.558

To return to Volf, he tries, through the self-donation of Christ to construct the possibility of relationship with the other “under the condition of enmity.”559 This kind of reconciliation goes beyond the rules of reciprocity; it is scandalous in its response to undeserved forgiveness. Volf states thus that the empty tomb was proof that the cry of desperation turns into a song.560

However, this ‘cry’ also points us to the unjust death that preceded it. On the cross, justice comes forth from injustice; the two intertwine in the divine embrace. The condition of reciprocity refers not to our demand but to Christ’s willingness to suffer for the other; for the unjust; for the abuser. The cross thus does not satisfy human ‘justice’ since it portrays an unjust act against the just. The scandal is not that justice is satisfied but the radical forgiving of injustice. Thus, for Volf, only Christ’s embrace in undeserved death can enable the peace beyond injustice so that forgiveness can become the “boundary between exclusion and embrace.”561

We must also bear in mind that Moltmann’s later articulation toward God’s atonement of the perpetrator and guilty keeps an emphasis on God’s atonement in the compassion of love.562 However, though Moltmann does show the atonement of the perpetrator through divine forgiveness, he does not emphasize it as does Volf. I sense that Moltmann’s main concern stays as it should on the plight of victims (as humanity and creation) and their continuing victimization through the abuse of power by perpetrators today.

However, Volf notices a ‘grace of embrace’ and argues it “…must help justice deal adequately with ever-changing differences among human beings.”563 Volf here proposes an aspect of justice that we cannot explain except in the human response to ‘Christ’s grace of embrace on the cross’. He is trying to vivify a view of justice through an understanding of Christ’s embrace in creative human energies as a will to embrace the perpetrator. He writes, “[all] indispensable actions against injustice must be situated in the

---

558 Translation by Hagner, Matthew 1–13, 144.
559 Volf, Exclusion, 25. In Volf’s soteriology, we see a view of the atonement that turns more to its ‘particular’ explication than does Moltmann’s. Compare Volf Exclusion, 222-225 (also 22-25) to Moltmann, Spirit, 132-138. See also Moltmann, Crucified, 256-266.
560 Volf, Exclusion, 27.
561 Volf, Exclusion, 125.
563 Volf, Exclusion, 224.
framework of the will to embrace the unjust. For only in our mutual embrace of the triune God can we find redemption and experience perfect justice.”

To illustrate Volf’s understanding of ‘Christ’s grace of embrace on the cross’ this chapter’s explorations turn briefly to his critique of the problem in the South African Kairos document which states that reconciliation in South Africa is not possible without first removing injustices. Volf goes on to argue against this view, and in favor of the primacy the cross-resurrection event gives to the triune God’s indiscriminate will to embrace both victims and perpetrators. In contrast to the Kairos document, Volf writes, “Since the God Christians worship is the God of unconditional and indiscriminate love, the will to embrace the other is the most fundamental obligation of Christians.”

The need is still to differentiate between God’s embrace of love, and its counterpart, the human embrace of loving the other/s through the Spirit. However, this is not to say victims cannot or should not through the Spirit forgive their perpetrator/s. The ‘tension of forgiveness’ is not a social construct that we can reify in dogma or system. Rather, it remains a doing with or for the other/s that takes its reference first from the actions of the triune God in the Christ-event, and second, from the ‘tension of forgiveness’ taught by Jesus in John 20:23. In this verse’s preceding actions Jesus declares ‘peace’ on them. Breathing on them, he said, “Receive the Holy Spirit” (verses 21-22). We might see here that it is through the Holy Spirit that each person has the freedom to choose to forgive, or not to forgive (verse 23). ‘Forgiveness’ is in this sense not a social or theological construct as much as it is what believers are able to do, or to withhold, through the Spirit of Christ in them.

To return to Volf, this is to say also that it is one thing for the all-powerful Divine Being to give up power to become powerless in human hands. However, it is quite another thing for powerless or helpless persons to give up the power they do not have, to embrace their abuser. I think that Volf’s argument here has some problems. Jesus did not embrace the money lenders in the temple. He cast them out. Jesus did not embrace the judgmental Pharisees but called them a brood of vipers. He also confronted the accusers of the woman caught in adultery with their culpability. Volf does insist that one does not give up on justice, but is this enough? Also, to what extent does Volf attend to the power differentials between the abuser and the abused, perpetrator and victim?

To reiterate Copeland’s quote in Penner’s thesis: ‘any appeal to the empirical or visual in the effort to understand human being is never innocent, never ahistorical, and never divorced from power.” These

---

564 Volf, *Exclusion*, 225. However, we should compare this view to the perspectives in this chapter’s first notes on Kimberly Penner’s thesis about the abuse of power in a Mennonite community through the misapplication of the teachings of Matthew 18:15-18. The work done through the Restorative Justice movement, such as in the Victim Offender Reconciliation Programs uses approaches that reference the aspects of responsibility, healing, and reconciliation – see Howard Zehr and Barb Toews, eds., *Critical Issues in Restorative Justice* (Monsey, NY: Criminal Justice Press, 2004).
568 Penner, *Discipleship*, 110.
perspectives show that we should not understand God’s forgiveness in human contours by its *dogma*. We should understand God’s forgiveness by its *doing* with or for the other/s as God’s peace and justice at work *through the energies of the Holy Spirit of the resurrection in the world*. Forgiveness, in this sense, must remain with the human to consent or refuse. However, also, we must *dis-cover* forgiveness, or *re-dis-cover* it for its quintessential fruit through following the Holy Spirit of the resurrection.569

It should be noted here also that Volf is against the idea that ‘accepts’ those who do good and ‘rejects’ those who do evil. He is against the approach that emphasizes an *us or them*, or an ‘our side’ or ‘the other side’. He writes that such a world does not exist and thus *cannot direct any search for peace* as it can abrogate the possibility of justice for victims and a proper passage for perpetrators from their guilt and debt.

Volf is here also differentiating between Christ’s grace on the cross as the *indiscriminate will to embrace* and the idea of an *indiscriminate embrace*. In other words, the embrace offered is only indiscriminate in so far that it is a ‘will to embrace’. He sets up the *distance* in the self and other relation that allows the *space* for the other/s to choose to respond or not to respond to the offered ‘will to embrace’. Thus, the ‘indiscriminate will to embrace’ and the ‘choice to respond’ present a *necessary* tensioned struggle. As noted, this ‘tensioned struggle’ depends on the willing suspension of the dichotomy between self and other, subject and object, and known and unknown.

Volf also gives priority to Christ’s ‘indiscriminate will to embrace’. He articulates it as a divine grace in the work of forgiveness and reconciliation. However, he shows Christ’s embrace not only as a continuing ‘*openness in tension*’ (a divine grace of ‘waiting for response’) from the other/s but as a *love that enables justice*. We may see this tensioned struggle at work, for instance, in the story of the accused woman recorded in John 7:53-8:11 (see 4/2 below). Therefore, viewed through Christ’s embrace of grace in and through the cross, Volf’s understanding of forgiveness and reconciliation stands in opposition to any ‘self-enclosed totality’. He opposes the idea of any ‘exclusion’ that circumvents either justice for victims or the proper openness to a ‘judgment- unto-salvation’ of perpetrators. For Volf, Christ’s embrace places all under the aegis of its work of salvation *for all* (ὥπερ πάντων) through God’s fathomless love for the creation (τα πάντα).570

I have shown here that Volf links the ‘grace of embrace’ to ‘justice’ in and through the indiscriminate will to embrace of the triune God in and through the cross-resurrection event. Quoting Tillich, he shows that the grace to embrace gives room to the *forgiving* and finally, *forgetting*, without which the unjust or perpetrator could not be “reaccepted into the unity to which [they] belong.”571

---

569 See the Pauline discussion on the fruit of the Spirit in Galatians 5:22-26 NET.
570 Quoting Nicolai Hartmann, Volf points out that “…it is important to note that human forgiveness cannot remove guilt,” only divine forgiveness can remove guilt so that, “unless forgiven by God, he or she remains guilty, human forgiveness notwithstanding” – see “Forgiveness,” note 35, 875.
Volf’s move here also shows a shift from the modern ‘politics of equal identity’ to the more recently understood ‘politics of difference’. Following Charles Taylor, Volf resists “the cardinal sin against the ideal of authenticity” that assimilates distinctness into “dominant or majority identity.”\textsuperscript{572} That is to say, for Volf, the ‘how’ of our doing with or for the other/s depends on an ongoing tension in the recognition-difference nexus. In other words, in Christ’s ‘invite’ to embrace the other/s in and through the cross we must allow the distinction to stand between an indiscriminate will to embrace and a discriminated embrace.

Volf takes this ‘embrace of difference’ on the cross deeper. He argues that the action of Christ on the cross implies the triune God’s ‘forgetting’ of humanity’s past sins. Volf sees this ‘forgetting’ as part of what a grace response to violence and perpetrators entails. However, space will not allow for an in-depth exploration of Volf’s concept of forgetfulness. I take up the idea of ‘forgetfulness’ in this study within the same framework as the previous explorations on the ‘tension of forgiveness’—i.e., as actions which we differentiate between those of the Divine and those of the human (even of those led by the Spirit).\textsuperscript{573}

To return to the emphasis on the ‘tension of forgiveness’ as a doing with or for the other/s, the Lord’s Prayer interestingly does not put the double-forgiveness in a ‘normative’ protasis-apodosis format (of if-then). It instead makes forgiveness about what those who live a new-creational life in Christ do (with or for one another and with or for the other/s). According to Donald Hagner, forgiveness is not conditional and does not mean that our forgiveness causes God’s forgiveness. The verse, “But if you do not forgive others, neither will your Father forgive your sins” makes the point, however, as Hagner puts it, of “the unthinkable aspect of not responding to others as God does for us.”\textsuperscript{574} Therefore, this call for the human response of grace in forgiveness also implies the chasm that exists between God’s self-giving suffering love on the cross and our inescapable human particularity—a ‘chasm’ that Christ’s embrace has bridged.\textsuperscript{575}

To put forgiveness in the context of promise, it is God who promises forgiveness and thus who enables forgiveness.\textsuperscript{576} Across the unbridgeable chasm between the human ‘impossible’ and the divine ‘possible’ stands the cross of Christ. This cross of Christ makes known to us through the resurrection of Christ a love that forgives and that enables the embrace of the other/s as a doing of love. This chapter’s explorations return here to the prior themes in chapters two and three that brought into view responses to peace through the exuberant-abundant resurrection life of Christ. These prior themes argued that this resurrection life overcomes the contradiction between promise and reality and between hope and experience. We may thus

\textsuperscript{573} See Volf, Exclusion, 134-135. Kierkegaard also takes up the idea of ‘forgetting’ in a two-fold sense as a love that ‘hides a multitude of sins’ through what it ‘forgets’ and a love that is ‘not forgotten’— see Works, 281.
\textsuperscript{574} Translation and comments on Matthew 6:13-14 by Hagner, Matthew 1–13, 144, 150.
\textsuperscript{575} Volf, Exclusion, 201.
\textsuperscript{576} Again, with Kierkegaard, God enables ‘forgiveness’ and ‘love. We might thus say that ‘love’ is not ‘any love’ but the ‘God who is love’. Humanitas is called into ‘God who is love’—or, humanity is invited to be in love with the God who is love and through God to love the other/s. In his commentary of 1 John 4:8b’s “God is love” (ὁ θεὸς ἡγάζειν ἑστιν), Stephen Smalley shows that John’s intent is against the contrasting aspect of “Love is God” (Smalley, 1, 2, 3 John, 240). Kierkegaard writes, “What love does, that it is; what it is, that it does—at one and the same moment” – see Works, 280.
recognize again here Jesus’s saying recorded in Luke 18:27, “...for what is impossible with men, is possible with God” (NET).

We could not know what forgiveness means without the ‘embrace of God’s love’ in the cross-resurrection event. We could not understand what it is to love our enemy if not for the suffering love that endured the ignominy of death at the hands of the violent. Our particularity is an endemic one-sidedness that limits our understanding of what ‘perfect justice’ is. I do not mean here that one-sided responses are necessarily invalid but that they always stand with both their truth and their presuppositions. Nor am I saying that there can be no collective understanding of evil, but as Moltmann has contended, that it is Christ who brings peace and justice. Amid the uproar of the victim’s cries of lament throughout history, the sinless Christ shattered on the cross becomes for us the new-creational life through his act of forgiveness. This call to forgiveness through Christ is the form of God’s divine justice.577

What also surfaces here is a correspondence with this study’s earlier explorations of a ‘tensioned struggle’ as a response of embrace for peace and justice in the world. This response of embrace stands against a dichotomous understanding of the human-divine and self-other relations. The ‘tension in God’s love in and through the cross and resurrection’ surmounts the ‘cleavage’ between all paradoxes and dichotomies by taking up within its love the differences and discord within them.578

God’s love thus holds within the tensioned space of its embrace the giving of dignity to the other/s in ‘distance’. We see here in the fathomless divine grace an ongoing ‘open space’—a ‘broad space’ as it were—that allows even in the abyssal violence of the cross the possibility of a ‘face to face’.579 The ‘broad space’, as Moltmann shows, is in the nearness of God.580

The perspectives brought out so far show that we cannot fully view the embrace of the perpetrator from outside the ‘history in God’—in other words, from outside the cross-resurrection event. It is this event in history which has opened to humanity and creation the new-creational life of the Spirit.581 It is only this divine love, which we see in this event, that enables the human response in the ‘tension of forgiveness’ for the sake of peace and justice in the world. We must, therefore, in this sense see that God is not about love; God is more than someone we love—God is love; and in God’s love, we love the other/s; in God’s

578 See Moltmann, Spirit, 260.
579 Moltmann, Spirit, 305.
580 See Moltmann, Source, 72. Space does not allow a more in-depth exploration between Moltmann and Ricoeur of the imaginative act in the cross and resurrection that speaks to the reconciliation and healing of the world. Clawson sees this ‘imaginative act’ of hope at work in the present in both Moltmann’s social trinitarian theology and Ricoeur’s hermeneutics of imagination. She writes, “Hope, understood through Ricoeur’s hermeneutical lens, in this way avoids being bracketed off in the future or past, but instead can dwell in the midst of the present as a transforming presence. … One is able to then live into the hope of future redemption and reconciliation by performing the text of the incarnation/resurrection through acts of hope in the present. This imaginative interpretive act enables Moltmann’s vision that ‘here and now, already, Christians live by virtue of the peace of the kingdom which is to come, and wherever possible introduce that peace into this violent world’” – see “Imagination”, 307, quoting Moltmann, “Peace, the Fruit of Justice,” in Johann Baptist Metz and Jürgen Moltmann, Faith and the Future: Essays on Theology, Solidarity, and Modernity (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1995), 151.
581 See Moltmann, Crucified, 247.
love, we live in hope with or for the future of the other/s. We see here that it is because of this love that
we might discern the creative energies of a love that knows no end—that gets more profound and broader
with the years; that mellows with time, and that keeps the fragrance of grace in its difficult seasons.
This chapter’s explorations now turn to the aspect of doing as a trinitarian embrace at the ‘public
margins’ and the work of christomorphic ‘humble and courageous love’ with or for the other/s in the
gospels.

4/2—A Humble and Courageous Trinitarian-Doxological Embrace at the ‘Public
Margins’

Recorded in John 7:53-8:11 (according to the later manuscripts582) Jesus stands between a woman
catched in the act of adultery and the accusers intent on stoning her. As Schnackenburg puts it, this puts
Jesus in an invidious position of having to choose between ‘Jewish justice’ and advocating death which
was against Roman rule, making him an ‘anti-Roman’ revolutionary.583 The accusers knew the Torah
demanded her death. Schnackenburg writes [my comment], “Since Jesus shows mercy and love towards
sinners, they [the accusers] want to see what he has to say on this concrete case.” However, Jesus refused
to be ‘caught in the dilemma’. He turns to them and says: ‘let him who is without sin cast the first stone.’
He then stoops to the ground and begins writing in the sand. He lowers himself before them and before
the accused woman. Might we see here in Jesus’s stooping to the ground an action that signifies to us both
his profound humility and courage? Might we also see his deep empathy and love for someone despised,
rejected, marginalized, treated unworthily—without respect and dignity, as is this accused woman
standing at his side?

His message of fathomless love shows here that he sees her more profoundly than what she did and
that he had seen through the accusers’ hypocrisy. He placed himself between them and her and beneath
them and her. The accusers dropped the stones from their hands and left. Jesus then turns to the woman
and asks her: ‘Woman where are your accusers’? ‘They are gone’ she said. He then responds, ‘Neither do
I condemn you. Go and sin no more’. About Jesus’s response of ‘Neither do I condemn you,’
Schnackenburg writes, “[that it] is an acquittal, but not such as to suggest that Jesus too counts himself

582 Beasley-Murray who commentates on this story contends that though not penned by the writers of the Gospels,
we cannot doubt its ‘substantial truth’. He writes, “The saying that it preserves is completely in character with what
we know of our Lord, and quite out of character with the stern discipline that came to be established in the developing
Church… We may regard the story as one [of] those incidents in the life of our Lord that circulated in the primitive
Church and did not come to the notice of our Evangelists … it was saved from oblivion by some unknown Christian,
who wrote it down. If we ask why it was set in its present place, the answer must be a genuine sense of fitness of
context. The theme of judgment is strong in chaps. 7–8; the story could well be regarded as illustrative of 7:24 and
8:15–16; and we note the opposition of the Pharisees to Jesus in 7:46–52 and 8:13” – John, 143-144. See also Rudolf
Schnackenburg, The Gospel according to St. John, Volume 2, Commentary on Chapters 5-12 (London, UK: Burns
& Oats, 1982), 162-171.
583 Schnackenburg, John, Volume 2, 164.
among the sinners. He gives it as a free decision, by the authority of one who knows the mercy of God.\textsuperscript{584} Jesus also makes clear in the second statement (“Go and sin no more”) that in her acquittal he places an \textit{obligation} so that God’s mercy made known to her could help her avoid sin in the future. He makes in this sense, a ‘judgment-unto-salvation’. He takes up a ‘\textit{tension of forgiveness}’ expressed not in dogma but a relationship—in the whole person to whole person (or ‘face to face’). His grace thus invites us in our encounters today to a similar response of relationship through the Spirit between people and people for the sake of peace and justice in the world.

Schnackenburg here writes against Augustine’s idea that this story shows ‘the Lord judges sin, not persons’. In contrast, he writes [my comment], “The point [in this story] is not the condemnation of sin but the calling of sinners: not a doctrine but an event. Jesus accepts sinners in God’s name; his will is not to judge but to save.”\textsuperscript{585} He goes on to show the connection between this event and the story of the penitent woman in Luke 7:47. Here, it is the indignant Pharisee who stands in the place of the accuser, and Jesus loving the other/s again as the bringer of mercy, hope, healing, and dignity.

Jesus dignifies the marginalized. He gives them a voice. He hears their cries. He answers them with a fathomless love and mercy. He places himself as their buffer, savior, hope, defender, and friend, but one also who speaks the truth to them in love.

Similarly, in the story of the Syrophoenician woman, Jesus dignifies this foreign person and finds in her, as Choan-Seng Song describes it, a kind of faith that those whose eyes were “…glued only to the bread on the master’s table” completely missed.\textsuperscript{586}

The book of Hebrews (5:8) tells us of Jesus’s humility and courage as that he ‘learned obedience by the things he suffered.’ I take it that he learned this humility amid a world of hatred and love; a world of sin and holiness; a world of accusation and forgiveness. He also may have learned it amid lives of both fear and faith; brokenness and happiness; law and grace; in the tension between truth and grace, and in the encounter between divine love and human love.

He knew the condition of humanity and took up its defense by accepting the violence of its sin against his own body on the cross. Here the Father lifted his stooping in death and gave him a name above every name. A name stands for an identity. The identity here shown is of a \textit{name above all names} as the identity of the one who inhabits that name in humility and self-giving. Here God lifts the Christ so that God might draw all from their death to new-creational life in the Spirit. Here the journey becomes about the Christ entering the space between the accuser and the accused; between the victim and the perpetrator; between the known of religious law and the not yet known of God’s love. God’s love (taken by hate and violence into the darkness of hell) makes possible the light that saves the entire world from sin and death and for new-creational life.

---

\textsuperscript{584} Schnackenburg, \textit{John}, Volume 2, 167.
\textsuperscript{585} Schnackenburg, \textit{John}, Volume 2, 168.
\textsuperscript{586} Choan-Seng Song, \textit{The Compassionate God: An Exercise in the Theology of Transposition} (Maryknoll, NY: SCM Press Limited, 1982), 139.
To return to the recorded event of the accused woman, Jesus heralds the inceptions of this epitome moment when he defends this woman’s honor and dignity. He does not discuss her with her accusers. He shields her from their stones and judgments. He places himself in the line of their attack. He implied: stoning her is stoning me. This kind of love is not another thing the human needs to do. This kind of love is a glimpse (as the woman saw) of who this God is who comes to be ‘face to face’ with humanity and creation. However also, in showing love to this woman, Jesus’s reveals not only God’s tenderness, acceptance, and protection of her but also God’s exhortation to her to live a life of purity. This story brings into view an embrace of love and an embrace that leaves the other/s free to choose what their response will be. Such love would not hide from them the obligation to live a life of dignity in the fruit of peace and justice with or for the other/s. This love’s presence in grace and tenderness presents us with the choice to enter ‘the pains and joys of our own alteration’ (to use Moltmann’s term) or to decline such a grace. Jesus pointed her to the possibility of her alteration and yet left her free to decide how she would respond to his ‘embrace’. As I understand it then, a love of ‘neither do I condemn you, go and sin no more’ is a love that graces our broken humanity through a justice- unto- salvation or a ‘judgment- unto- salvation’.

4/2/1—The Embrace of God’s Love as ‘Picking up our Cross’ and Turning to the ‘Public Margins’

Jesus resituates our understanding of all the gospel narratives to the centrality of God’s life lived away from what is ‘above’ and ‘better’. He points us toward living life among and beneath and with the poor the widow and orphans the imprisoned the hungry the victim, and the abused creation. The recorded events of the gospels paint a picture not only of the Son of man- Son of God, Jesus Christ, who comes having ‘no place to lay his head’ but also of the call to all to follow him by ‘picking up their cross’. This cross is a call to enter with Jesus through the Spirit into a life of humility and compassion for the other/s. Is this not what we understand in the question asked as recorded in the words of Matthew 25:39-40 NET: “When did we see you sick or in prison and visit you?” To which the king answers: “I tell you the truth, just as you did it for one of the least of these brothers or sisters of mine, you did it for me.” Jesus implies in this teaching that he is himself at the margins with the marginalized. This chapter in Matthew’s gospel which began with a commendation to the one who was ‘faithful in little’ (25:21) ends in Jesus showing a love that takes on himself the burdens and afflictions of ‘the little’.

The event of Matthew 25:34-40 shows Jesus’s inclusion into the community of Christ all the poor, the imprisoned, the sick, and those who have been ‘marginalized’ and rejected. He redefines here what it
means to ‘belong to God’. As Moltmann further argues, the people Jesus names in Matthew 25:35-40 belong constitutively in the community of Christ. He writes,

[they belong] …not merely by the way and as welfare cases. But where Christ is, there the life-giving Spirit is too. That is why the fellowship of the Spirit must be sought at the place where distressed people seek and experience the nearness of Jesus. 589

What has surfaced so far is a theology of ‘the tension of forgiveness’ and Jesus’s fathomless love which has continued the prior explorations on Jesus’s use of the humility of the child to counter the disciples’ ‘interest in greatness and power’. 590 This humility in the divine also echoes the ignominy of Jesus’s birth in a Bethlehem manger (“because there was no place for them in the inn”). 591 Joseph was warned in a dream to flee to Egypt because Herod was looking for the child to kill him. 592 The one who comes to redeem all things, here as a ‘little child’, begins his life on earth in his parents’ agony of rejection, alienation, and because of the threat to his life.

It is difficult to resist the conclusion that Jesus comes to the world as one who understands the suffering of those marginalized and denuded of human dignity through abuse, sickness, status, culture, and circumstance. As a human, he embraces their humanity and brokenness with the embrace of God’s love. This embrace is the ‘welcome of God to all’ despite condition, violence, and hatred. Matthew 11:25-30 (NET) records this ‘welcome’ as follows,

At that time Jesus said, ‘I praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and intelligent, and revealed them to little children. Yes, Father, for this was your gracious will. All things have been handed over to me by my Father. No one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and anyone to whom the Son decides to reveal him. Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke on you and learn from me, because I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy to bear, and my load is not hard to carry’.

Several gospel accounts have recorded for us the stories of those who did return this embrace of love. The centurion as Roman ‘intruder’ came to Jesus in his need to have his servant healed. The woman who was sick for twelve years pressed through the crowd knowing Jesus’s compassion for the sick. 593 Zacchaeus was moved by that same love to return all that he had stolen from others. 594 The man suffering

589 Moltmann, Spirit, 245. I note the critique by Martin R. Tripole, S.J, on Moltmann’s understanding of the ‘poor’ in Matthew 25. See “Ecclesiological,” 30-35. Tripole understands the ‘poor’ to refer to ministers or witnesses of the gospel. Bauckham in his comments of Moltmann’s view of the ‘poor’ brings up J. R. Donahue’s conclusion which though it does not support Moltmann’s idea of Christ’s presence in the poor, is generally compatible with Moltmann’s ecclesiology – see J. R. Donahue, ‘The “Parable” of the Sheep and the Goats: A Challenge to Christian Ethics,’ Theological Studies 47 (1985), 3-31. Bauckham, in his response to both, writes, “But if the specific idea of Christ’s promise to be present in the poor cannot be derived from Matthew 25, Moltmann’s more general notion of the church’s necessary solidarity with the poor is christologically based on Jesus’s fellowship with the poor in his ministry (Church, 78-80) and his identification with the godforsaken on the cross” – see Theology, 131. See also the opening paragraphs and notes of chapter two, and Moltmann, Experiences in, 132, 265-267.
590 See Matthew 18:1-6.
591 Luke 2:7b NET.
592 Matthew 2:13.
593 Mark 5:25-34.
from Dropsy understood the welcome of God in the compassionate face of Jesus. This man’s story continues our understanding of Jesus’s relationship with the poor and sick set in antithesis to those who claimed an ‘expertise’ but who lacked compassion for the marginalized, needy and sick. What of the recorded story of Mary who broke the alabaster jar of ointment on Jesus’s feet? Was she not affirming that she had seen a quintessential acceptance in the one whose feet she had anointed and dried with her hair? She had filled the house with the fragrance of her oil. To Judas Iscariot’s objections, Jesus’s recorded response is, “Let her alone; she had to keep it for the day of my burial; for the poor you always have with you, but you do not always have me.”

In all the recounted encounters between Jesus and those who came to him we see the love of God entering the world of humanity in humility, compassion, and courage, to be among the marginal as the one ‘marginalized’. His love is one thus that is willing to embrace the marginalized in the humility and courage of kenosis. Born in the humility and humanity of a manger this divine love was already ‘bearing’ the pain of what it would mean to love the unloved and to embrace them and their margins at the cost of his life. He had ‘learned obedience by the things he suffered,’ and he would die that the other/s would dis-cover a love for the other/s in Christ. Those the world calls ‘the margins’ the triune God takes up in Godself and makes the place where he resides. Chapter two’s explorations took up this divine journey of love as a descent into hell and as God entering within the despair of God-forsakenness. God gives up power and fellowship in the Trinity to enter the most extreme form of alienation and marginalization.

These perspectives have shown that the gospel of Jesus Christ is ‘one-sided and partisan’ to the poor, marginalized, sick and destitute. It is a ‘movement of the poor’ (to use Moltmann’s term) whose master himself lived ‘marginalized’ as one with them. Is it not thus ‘at the margins’ that we may find Christ today? As Moltmann argues,

God is already present among the poor and the sick, and among the children and slaves of the people (ochlos)… The One who proclaims the kingdom of God also represents the poor to whom the kingdom belongs. The poor are his family, his people, for they are the people of God’s coming kingdom. He is one of them.

The search here through an exploration of a journey of doing with or for the other/s at the public margins is a thickening of a theology of the Spirit’s work into ‘all’ humanity. The words ‘public margins’ refer again to Moltmann’s two-mode church. As noted above, he speaks of the church “manifest”—

---

596 Translation of John 12:8 by Beasley-Murray, John, 202. Mary’s loving act of pouring ointment on Jesus’s feet and wiping his feet with her hair brings up the place of the proper ‘boundaries’ (or tensions) in God’s love. When love is pure, as in Jesus, it keeps a ‘tension’ of respect or ‘boundary’ of dignity toward the ‘other/s’ (here the woman) that provides ‘secured spaces’ for expressions of abundant expressions of love in humanity. Without proper boundaries, or ‘tensions’, love is not God’s love.
597 Charles Fensham writes, “Jesus’s anthropology invites us to see those who are unacceptable and on the margins through new Gospel eyes” – see Do no Harm (pre-publication manuscript, 2017), 29. See also John 12:24-27.
598 Moltmann, Way, 101-102; Experiences in, 126, 265-267.
599 See also chapter two (2/2/5).
intentional Christian community, and the church “latent”—the poor and marginalized. However, the continuing development here of the idea of a ‘latent’ church includes all those in whom the Spirit is working with or without the knowledge of the manifest church. In this sense, the church is not a church ‘for’ the poor and margins but a church ‘of’ the poor at the margins. Moltmann argues for this direction of love as both toward and in (or at) the margins. He writes (his emphases),

Christ’s apostolate says what the church is, ‘the least’ say where the church belongs. The hidden Christ awaits those who are his in the poor and the children of the people. The manifest Christ comes to them with those who are his. In the apostolate the risen, coming Christ is present; in the poor the suffering, crucified Christ looks at us and waits for us.

4/2/2—The Doing of Love as Humble ‘Embrace’ in the Symbol of ‘Foot-washing’

The foot-washing event recorded in John 13:1-17 opens for us a teaching Jesus gives to the disciples that symbolizes his humility in the cross. Jesus with a towel and bowl begins to wash the disciples’ feet. Peter refuses to allow it. I take this to mean that he saw Jesus as his Lord above him and not alongside or below him kneeling doing a menial task as his servant and his friend. Jesus responds ‘if I cannot wash your feet, Peter, you cannot be part of me’—why was that so? What was going on that made foot-washing so pivotal an idea in this event that describes Jesus as alongside and below?

Jesus’s response to Peter may seem excessive. However, as Schnackenburg argues in his commentary of John, a meaningful connection becomes clearer here between foot-washing and the cross of Christ. Schnackenburg opposes the exegetical approach that links foot-washing to the sacraments. He argues instead for the idea that the symbol of foot-washing becomes here the contour of how we might understand the love of Christ in and through the cross.

Viewed via Schnackenburg, Peter’s flat refusal becomes clearer as well as Jesus’s response to him. Schnackenburg’s exegesis of the foot-washing event brings out a meaning that I take as Jesus saying to them, ‘I am going to die on the cross for all humanity. Humans cannot die on the cross the way I will. However, the way you will live in me is by carrying your cross represented here to you symbolically by my washing your feet and you washing one another’s feet (meaning also the feet of “all”).’ Schnackenburg shows that Jesus contrasts the present (in verses 3-10) with an undefined ‘afterward’ which could not reference the later discussion of verses 12-17 but references the event of the cross and resurrection. The

600 Moltmann, Experiences in, 266. See also Charles Fensham’s argument on why “there is a sense in which the distinction between the ecclesia and the poor should be blurred” – Emerging from the Dark Age Ahead: The Future of the North America Church (Toronto, CA: Novalis Publishing Inc., 2008), 47.
601 On a slightly different take, Pope Francis has importantly reaffirmed the importance of a heart for the poor at the margins. For instance, in a recent article, he described the love for the poor as “the center of the Gospel” – see Cath News, November 4, 2015.
602 Moltmann, Experiences in, 267.
604 Schnackenburg, John, Volume 3, 19.
public and all-encompassing context of the ‘word of the cross’ as Christ’s redemptive work ‘for all’ makes Jesus’s foot-washing about more than disciples caring for one another, and also more than the eucharistic ritual. Schnackenburg writes,

The washing of the disciples’ feet is interpreted in the Christological and soteriological sense as a symbolic action in which Jesus makes his offering of himself in death graphic and effective, not in a sacramental manner, but by virtue of his love, which his disciples experience to the extreme limit (see v. 1).605

The symbol of foot-washing here goes beyond its depiction as a purely sacramental act. It depicts the symbolic response of believers to God’s love for God’s Other, the human, and thus stands for how the human should act in love to the whole of humanity and creation. Without curbing the sacramental aspects of the language of foot-washing, I am taking up here its character of Christlike humility and courageous turn of ‘doing’ with or for the other/s. This ‘turn’ in humility encompasses symbolically the kind of love Christ shows on the cross. The prior point of a differentiation between the death of Jesus on the cross and the call to followers of Jesus Christ to ‘pick up their cross’ is here in some ways contextualized and practicalized by Schnackenburg’s thesis on foot-washing. I do not think this means, however, that foot-washing completely symbolizes what it means for followers of Christ to ‘pick up their cross’. Rather, this symbol gives ‘hands and feet’ to our understanding of the cross. Also, this symbol reminds the disciples of Jesus’s humility and willingness to do the menial tasks for the sake of God’s love for them and for those whom they would serve, and for the entire world.

Jesus is also speaking prophetically of what such a symbolic act means as the trinitarian doxological movement of the Trinity in the resurrection, which we might paraphrase in this sense:

As an act and movement that opens, through the energies of the Holy Spirit of the resurrection, how humanity and creation might adore God for Godself and glorify God because God is who God is.606

As Jesus’s answer to Peter’s refusal also shows,607 Jesus was pointing to a time after the Christ-event when they would ‘remember’. We might see here the connection between Jesus’s symbolic action in the foot-washing event and what the disciples would only understand ‘afterward’. This delayed response speaks in a decisive way to all of Jesus’s other actions and sayings recorded in the gospels.

His humble and ‘doing’ love for the other/s which we see here represented in the symbol of foot-washing speaks thus to the life of humility sown as a grain of wheat that falls to the ground. Though sown, we ‘re-discover’ again the new life as it bursts forth out of the ground of its death. This Christlike humility of service is a ‘conversion’ to God’s love.608 A life sown thus in Christ finds ‘new life’ for self and the

---
605 Schnackenburg, John, Volume 3, 19-20.
606 See Moltmann, Experiences in, 144, also Spirit, 304.
607 "What I am doing you do not realize now, but you will come to know later" – translation of John 13:7 by Beasley-Murray, John, 228.
608 As noted, I have taken up the idea with Moltmann of a preference for the word ‘conversion’ instead of ‘repentance’ ("in order to keep the idea free from the flavor of self-punishment" – Way, 102). See chapter three (3/2).
other/s. This kind of life moves among the ‘marginal’ on ‘bended knees in loving service’ caring for the other/s and takes up the situations, dreams, issues, mandates, cares, hopes, and needs of the other/s for the sake of dignifying the other/s. A doing with or for the other/s in this sense is a response of love through the tensioned exuberant abundance of the Christ-event. This ‘tensioned exuberant abundance’ through the Spirit of Christ inspires our seeing and knowing, and hoping. This ‘tensioned exuberant abundance’ teaches wisdom and enables the wonder of seeing and knowing the perichoretic self-donation of God that leads to ‘hope-against-hope’ (or to hope in tension). This hope in tension leads humanity to a doing of acts of thanksgiving through a trinitarian doxology with and for the other/s. So, the continuous movement is of sending grace, receiving grace, and returning thanks through hopeful deeds. This extending of grace to the other/s through the Spirit helps us to give more thankful deeds of gracious embrace and praise and forms part of the journey with God’s transformative drawing-in of all creation. The Holy Spirit is at work drawing-in all of creation into the continuous perichoretic movement of the triune God ‘that God may be all in all.’ Therefore, the mission of followers of Jesus Christ is a doing with or for the other/s in the humility of service and with thanksgiving.

We cannot ‘self-justify’ such a path of doing God’s love with or for the other/s. Only the Spirit of Christ enables us to take such a ‘way’ (a theologia viae); it comes through a conversion to God’s love via an ongoing surrender of the self to Christ.

4/2/3—Embrace as a Conversion to Love at the Public Margins

The expert who wanted to justify himself asked the question: “Who is my neighbor?” Jesus’s recorded response was through a parable about two marginalized people: one a disregarded injured person; the other a despised Samaritan. Jesus seems here to be looking for from his hearers a conversion as it were to a love of the other/s at the margins.

The Samaritan, himself a foreigner, even perhaps a cultural outcast in that region, shows in this story, through a practical love for a stranger, the antithesis that exists between the passion of God’s love for the other/s, and those who refuse (for whatever reason) to ‘embrace’ the other/s in need. The Samaritan interrupts his journey for an injured man. Out of compassion, he approaches the man. ‘Compassion’ here is not born of theory, dogma, or duty but of conversion to God’s mercy. The Greek word used (καὶ ἰδὼν ἑσπεριάσθη – he had compassion) may signify, as John Nolland puts it, “giving good gifts to our children.” The Samaritan ‘stoops’ over the man and cleans his wounds with oil and wine (seemingly no expense spared); takes him to a local inn and stays with him through the night. Before leaving the next

609 John 12:24-27.
610 See Romans 4:18. In ‘hope’ Abraham believed ‘against hope’.
day, he pays all the expenses. His concern does not end there. He instructs the innkeeper to keep the man safe until he returns at which point he would pay all the added costs. How would we understand such a story today among individuals and communities living in the contemporary world? Would we respond with indifference, suspicion, an excuse, or would we respond with conviction and compassionate action? The Samaritan in the story saw the man not as an enemy or as unworthy or as too much trouble, but as a ‘brother’ who needed his help. The Samaritan’s doing for the other/s shows a heart ‘willing to embrace’ the other/s that became for the injured man the practical embrace of hope and love.

The work of Christ’s embrace of all on the cross thus creates a way for us of how we might understand reconciliation between the lover and the loved.

We might also see the work of Jesus’s love at the margins at work in the story of the Prodigal son (and his merciful father) as recorded in Luke 15. This story stands for a conversion that came through the love of a father for his son. This father stayed ‘open in love’ and waited patiently for the response of embrace from his son. The story begins with ruptured bonds of ‘trust’ as the son leaves on a journey of self-discovery. He then squanders his inheritance and comes to the point where he can understand the difference between purely selfish love and a true love for the other/s and its alternatives. Significantly as it regards this story, the remembrance of ‘love’ awakens him to conversion. The remembrance of his father’s love transforms his heart and his circumstance.

The father in the meantime stays in love with his son and waits for the time when the son learns to respond in love to his father. Here, the son experiences a crisis in the depth of self-exclusion and personal despair that reawakens his trust in a personal relationship with his father. The personal “theosis” is not complete for him until he sees the sight ahead of his wildly laughing father with arms open wide running toward him – this sight is thus a ‘gift’ to him from his father. The life of this ‘gracious father’ also brings into focus here what the Holy Spirit makes possible today through a trinitarian doxology—a sustainable love for the other/s despite circumstances of rejection, alienation, and separation. Can we find a reality that exists today which makes the picture of a ‘running, laughing’ divine Father as normal as the fact of Jesus Christ who works through fathomless love, joy, forgiveness, mercy, and grace, as Mediator in the confounded war between belief and unbelief?

We might also understand that in the scene at the Sermon on the Mount both the disciples of Jesus and the poor, sick and abandoned people, followed Jesus. As Moltmann puts it: ‘the mourners and the merciful” “…is what we find if we put together the passive and the active Beatitudes listed in Matthew’s gospel.” Moltmann here again points to the community of Christ made up of ‘believers’ and the ‘poor’. Moltmann thus extends the idea and experience of the community of Christ to those on the ‘other side of the church’ described above as those ‘at the margins’. As noted above, we cannot exclude in any way

---

613 See Taylor, Secular, 351.
614 Moltmann, Experiences in, 132.
615 Moltmann, Experiences in, 132.
from Jesus’s death on the cross, these, so described here as marginalized by life, circumstance, status, culture, and condition. Jesus identifies completely in his humiliating death with their humiliation in life. It is also in this sense that Moltmann includes in the ‘community of Christ’ ‘the crucified people’ in whom “the crucified Christ is present and calls the righteous to himself.” As he argues,

If this viewpoint is correct, there is no ecclesial hermeneutics commensurate with ‘the matter of scripture’ without the hermeneutics of the poor, and no appropriate hermeneutical praxis without the fellowship of the poor and their liberation. This makes it clear that there is no all-encompassing hermeneutics of the Bible’s promissory history of the kingdom of God without ethics and politics - the ethics of life and the politics of the righteousness which puts things to rights and creates rightful justice.

The pathos, grace, and embrace of the love of God toward humankind is the antithesis of actions that result in taking advantage of others. The feminists agree in their criticism of any theology or ecclesiology that does not account for the marginalized (here marginalization does not imply the small, but the excluded and ignored). To ‘exclude’ in this way, Letty M. Russell writes, is to share “in the oppression of patriarchal structures.” She calls for a rereading of the human story through a “critical analysis of racism and classicism.” Russell also speaks of a new way that the marginalized can see the margins. She writes, “[a] form of empowerment [is] to choose the margin as a place to stand and work or to move to the center in order to gain the ability to take back.” Space does not allow here a thorough exploration of the discriminatory “marginalizing” of such communities as the LGBTQIA (or GSRM), among others.

---

616 Moltmann, Experiences in, 132.
617 Moltmann, Experiences in, 132-133. A fuller discussion of the ‘uncrossable barrier’ (to use Bauckham’s term) that Moltmann tries to set up (to guard against his concerns of triumphalism, viz., against the idea that the church can become the universal kingdom) is beyond the purview of this study. I do not agree with Bauckham’s qualifications of the benefit of Moltmann’s ‘uncrossable barrier’ in contemporary ecclesiological strategy. Bauckham presents the argument that “It may well be that Moltmann’s ecclesiological concerns can be maintained without setting any limits on the church’s mission to call people to faith in Jesus Christ” – Theology, 150. See also Moltmann, Church, 147-149.
618 The detailing and discussion of all the elements of marginalization in the contemporary world are beyond the purview of this study. These elements include not only the existing visible minorities but also the emerging visible and invisible minorities, as well as those marginalized within families, communities, groups, cultures, nations, world, and creation.
619 Russell, Church, 27.
620 Russell, Church, 29.
621 Russell, Church, 26.
622 For the process toward alienation, see Elizabeth A. Armstrong, Forging Gay Identities: Organizing Sexuality in San Francisco, 1950-1994 (Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press, 2002). Bonhoeffer’s concept of God shines the light on a proper response in our day to the abuse of power in any form. In answer to the question: who is God? He responds, “The experience that a transformation of all human life is given in the fact that ‘Jesus is there only for others’”. His ‘being there for others’ is the experience of transcendence. It is only this ‘being there for others’, maintained till death, which is the ground of his omnipotence, omniscience, and omnipresence. Faith is participation in this being of Jesus (incarnation, cross, and resurrection). Our relation to God is not a ‘religious’ relationship to the highest, most powerful, and best Being imaginable—that is not authentic transcendence—but our relation to God is a new life in ‘existence for others’, through participation in the being of Jesus. The transcendental is not infinite and unattainable tasks, but the neighbour who is within reach in any given situation. God in human form...” – Letters, 381.
Concerning the LGBTQIA community, Elizabeth Armstrong writes that the “fundamental problem with society is alienation.” She claims here that this is what has driven the alternate political and social “quest for authentication.”\(^623\) Alienation is the consequence of exclusion. Exclusion, it seems, has mustered its power at the behest of various power structures (religious and secular). Patriarchal and other aspects of dominance have exercised their controls through the social structures of racism, classicism, and heterosexism (even in the name of Christ). These also have engineered various forms of “exclusions” against those who did not fit doctrinal or dogmatic schemata.\(^624\) As noted above, where these exclusions have run contra to the love of Christ, abuses and suffering have resulted.

Charles Fensham also notices a work of God in the margins in his arguments for a coming of age of those living at the margins. He writes, “Those who live in the margins know the world, its suffering and its context in a unique way.” He goes on to show an important link between “marginal knowing” and “the truth of the gospel.”\(^625\)

**4/3—Assessments**

God’s embrace of humanity and creation viewed as two loves (of God and neighbor) calls for an end to discord among both friends and enemies. It calls for an end to the hatred among religions and faith expressions.\(^626\) It makes room for their differences. It invites the excluded from the public margins to a renewed interanimatorive conversation through the Spirit of Christ that does not have ‘power over’ or ‘oppressive and exploitative power’ as its end.\(^627\) It invites responders in humble service to care for the needs of and with the other/s. It invites renewed opportunities for discourse and conversation. It invites humility. It helps us to hear; to dignify, and to respect the voices of those silenced by abuse, or fear. It invites humanity to the ‘hard yards’ of a tensioned struggle in the turn to the other/s through the exuberant abundance of hope in the Spirit. It invites the burying of the hatchets of war. It invites a renewed look together for a shared future in humanity and creation. It invites the perpetrators, like Zacchaeus, to restore what they broke, or stole. It allows for the atonement or expiation of the perpetrator. Every person carries already within them the grace of God’s image for a relationship with God. Also, the Spirit already works to bring about their response of faith to God so that they too, in their present, may enjoy the glory of God on earth.

Many also stand firm as known and unknown with faces and hands and hearts turned to God. Through God, they turn to the embrace of neighbor as the doing of love with or for the other/s in their humility.

\(^{623}\) Armstrong, Forging, 18.
\(^{624}\) See Migliore, Faith, 30.
\(^{626}\) Moltmann, Experiences in, 306.
\(^{627}\) Moltmann, God for, 228.
through the ‘word of the cross’. These are *the hands and the feet and the voices and faces* of the trinitarian God who loves in the vision and vein of a Matthew 25-public embrace of the other/s. As writes Moltmann,

‘The closer we come to the cross of Christ, the closer we come to one another.’ How could we keep alive our divisions and enmities in the face of his bitter suffering and death? … Clasped by the arms of God stretched out in his suffering on the cross, how can we clench our fists, or cling fast with tenacious hands to what we possess…?628

Can we then find a unity-across-diversity in Christ’s public invitation *to all* that enables a *seeing and knowing* and *hoping and doing* with or for the other/s in creative human energies for the sake of a world of peace and justice? The concluding chapter takes up the continuing explorations of this question through the idea and experience of the *energies of the Holy Spirit of the resurrection*.

---

628 Moltmann, *God for*, 204-205.
CHAPTER 5—Conclusion

I draw on Moltmann to open this study’s concluding explorations of the intentional relation between the three core questions (or ‘journeys’), through his descriptions of the new-creational life and the ‘becoming’ of the creation that comes through the Spirit of the resurrection. He writes,

The expected ‘resurrection of the body’ is already present in ‘the Spirit of the resurrection’ and is effective here and now. Life in the Spirit of God is consequently a life in the power of the resurrection. Traditionally it was understood as rebirth through the Spirit and was symbolically sealed in baptism. Taken literally, it means ‘being born again to a living hope through the raising of Christ from the dead’ (I Peter 1:3). This spiritual rebirth of a human being is nothing less than the anticipated rebirth of the whole cosmos. It is a personal happening with cosmic relevance. The people who are ‘born again’ through the Spirit of the resurrection are not redeemed from ‘this wicked world’. They are called to the liberation of suffering creation and are made alive for that purpose. The living hope to which we are reborn is an inclusive hope by virtue of its very origin - that is, it is a vicarious, a representative hope for all sad created beings, but never an exclusive hope in which believers assure themselves complacently of their own salvation and let the rest of the world go to hell. … Christian faith starts from the assumption that it is impossible to reconcile life and death without the future of God. Should we accept death as a natural part of life? Then we must renounce love, which desires the life of the beloved and not his death. Should we renounce the body because it is mortal? Then we must renounce love altogether. …The liberation of the life drive from the death instinct is the authentic effect of hope for ‘the resurrection of the body’. Surprising though it may sound, it is hope for the resurrection of the body which is the foundation and motivation for what Bonhoeffer called ‘Christianity’s profound this-worldliness’. It is precisely this hope which - contrary to what Nietzsche said - moves men and women to ‘remain true to the earth’, even in the face of individual, collective and universal death. The Spirit of the resurrection is ‘the life-giving Spirit’. The Spirit is experienced wherever life here is quickened and its living energies awake. This happens wherever this mortal life is unreservedly affirmed. It is affirmed where its self-isolation is overcome through communication with other life. For life is communion in communication. Death acts on this life and in it as the power of division and isolation. But the resurrection actively penetrates life too, by virtue of hope, and cancels the results of death’s power.629

Moltmann takes up in this quote the elements of ‘the Spirit of the resurrection’ as ‘the life-giving Spirit’ who awakens to ‘new humanity’ those who turn to God by faith in Christ. This same Spirit works for the hope of the resurrection of all from the dead at the eschaton. This Holy Spirit’s creative energies make effective God’s love to the whole cosmos and enable the liberation of the creation in the fulfillment of God’s eternal purposes. I refer to the work of this ‘Spirit of the resurrection’ in the following explorations as the ‘creative energies of the Holy Spirit of the resurrection’. This ‘Spirit of the resurrection’ who animates the body of Christ is the one to whom Psalm 16:10 refers when it declares: “For you do not abandon me to Sheol, you do not permit your godly one to see the Pit.”630

629 Moltmann, Way, 263-264.
630 See Moltmann, Way, 225. Translation of Psalm 16:10 by Peter C. Craigie, Psalms 1–50, 154. Craigie shows here the effect of a ‘history of interpretation’ in the New Testament of turning an otherwise non-messianic Psalm to its messianic purpose (see Acts 2:25-28, and 13:35). He writes, “The psalmist was faced with imminent death; he rose in confidence above that danger to know the fullness of life in God’s presence. But in the new interpretation, Jesus not only faces imminent death—he goes on to die; whereas from the psalmist’s theological perspective, death would end it all, in the experience of Jesus, death became a door. The psalmist rose up in confidence against the danger of
Moltmann implicitly references here the work of the ‘Spirit of the resurrection’ and helps bring into concluding focus how we might understand the crucified Christ of the resurrection for the sake of a world of peace and justice. As Moltmann has shown, the triune God is ‘open’ to the world. God makes possible in a trinitarian cosmic panentheism both a ‘world in God’ and a ‘God in world and with world’ that exists in the creative energies or ‘breath’ of the Spirit of Christ in the ‘broad place’ of the ‘perichoretic community of the triune God’. Quoting Isaiah 34:16, Moltmann argues that this ‘living breath’ as God’s life ‘holds together all things’, and in the community of creation, furthers all of life.

Moltmann also uses Kant’s question: ‘what may I hope for?’ to address what he sees as a loss of meaning in contemporary society, as follows,

The more world events become the world of history and society, the more pressing the question about the meaning, purpose and end of this process becomes. The more human beings have the power to make things possible, the more their powerlessness to know the ‘why’ and the ‘where to’ is exposed. Kant’s question: ‘What can I hope for,’ crops up when, in the fear of possible disaster, the knowledge which is in itself limitless comes up against its limits. So, it is impossible to separate world history from the event of salvation, for it is impossible to abandon to disaster the history which we create through our knowledge of nature and our technology. Hope for salvation and fear of disaster ultimately provide the driving power for human action.

As the reader will have noted, I have taken my reference point so far from the tensioned exuberant abundance of the resurrection’s new-creational life. This tensioned exuberant abundance in new-creational life makes possible the taking up of our cross for a life lived in peace and justice through the energies of the Holy Spirit of the resurrection. These explorations have suggested that it is difficult to resist the idea of a ‘way’ (according to Moltmann) begun not in ‘speculative fantasies’ but in ‘the always greater Christ’ (to use Moltmann’s term)—i.e., of the Christ who is ‘always more and more’ through the resurrection. This study’s ‘journey’ has been in this sense an exploration toward Moltmann’s embodied

---

631 Moltmann, Experiences in, 330. See the discussion on the cosmic Spirit in God in, 98-103. See also Source, 31. Existing in the ‘broad place’ of the Spirit toward the ‘that God may be all in all’ continues the idea put out in chapter one (1/1), and chapter two (2/1/4) that a tensioned relation is fundamental to creativity in the world and beyond. In this sense, I have taken up the idea and experience of God’s creativity in humanity and creation that does not erase or subsume the positive and open, ongoing deepening process of discerning the tensioned life lived creatively in God as a turn to the other/s, or to otherness.

632 See Moltmann, Source, 31.


634 See Moltmann, Way, 276. Space has not allowed the exploration of a detailed comparison between Moltmann and Ricoeur’s respective hermeneutics of the resurrection. Ricoeur seems to draw from his hermeneutics of the text for his approach to the resurrection, which places him to some extent outside a discussion with Moltmann’s double emphasis for the resurrection—i.e., as both ‘event’ and ‘symbol’ (see Ricoeur’s discussions in Critique, 139-170). See also the discussions in Singh, “Resurrection,” 262-265, for the possible abrogation of Moltmann’s understanding of the resurrection in Ricoeur’s hermeneutics of the resurrection. Singh argues that Ricoeur’s ‘metaphoric’ emphasis signals a rapprochement to ‘myth’ like Bultmann’s existentialism although Ricoeur retains an orientation toward the future. In Critique, Ricoeur writes, “I come back to the idea that the cross and the resurrection are the same thing…” (153). He thus understands the resurrection (somewhat with Hegel) as ‘resurrection in the community’. In this sense, the resurrection for Ricoeur consists, “in having a body other than the physical body, that is to say, acquiring a historical body” (Ibid, 152). I take this to indicate Ricoeur’s metaphorical view of the resurrection and its figurative action in humanity and creation. In other words, that Ricoeur’s hermeneutics of the resurrection is a turn from a
open cosmic pneumatological christology as the ‘theologia viae’ of Christ in the creative energies of the Spirit.635

We can understand God’s life (as discussed in this study) as the creative energies of the Holy Spirit of the resurrection who comes for the sake of the peace and justice of God. This tensioned creative energy (made known through the Christ-event) bridges the cleavage and suspends the dichotomy (without loss of difference in the tension of continuing creativity) between self and other, subject and object, and known and unknown. In other words, we come to understand the resurrection life of Christ through its tension with the death of the cross as the drama of God’s embrace of the world. Christ’s death (which as noted, we see through the resurrection) thus opens the possibility of passage for all people and the creation of peace and justice in God.636

This study’s concluding explorations here toward this peace and justice in the resurrection life of the Spirit of Christ is a rekindling (or return) to Moltmann’s first quote set out in chapter one from The Way of Jesus Christ. His quote describes his decisive starting point from the resurrection for his social trinitarian theology of the cross.637 In the next section, I reference some aspects of the journey of the ‘community of Christ’ in the world living in the tensioned exuberant-abundant ‘unity-across-diversity’ of the creative energies of the Holy Spirit of the resurrection (5/1). A section then follows that discusses the transitional elements of this study’s three-fold journey (of seeing and knowing, hoping, and doing), and their linkages to potential future continuations (5/2). I close in section 5/3 (5/3/1-5/3/3) with some salient aspects of the relationship of the three intersecting implicit overall themes or tasks (evangelism, public theology, and personally experienced theology) to the three core journeys of seeing and knowing, hoping, and doing.

speculative future to a reality of godly actions in the now. The aspect of contrast with Moltmann’s hermeneutics of the resurrection is that Moltmann includes the event and symbol. He thus takes up both the triune God’s action within history and the symbol that speaks of Christ’s presence in the Spirit for the future of the world.

635 See Moltmann, Way, 213-341. An exploration of Bonhoeffer’s influence on Moltmann’s open cosmic christology of the ‘manifest and latent’ community of Christ is beyond the purview of this study. Bonhoeffer’s concern (as Moltmann’s) was the question of how to join Christ and the modern world that has ‘come of age’ (to use Bonhoeffer’s term). Bonhoeffer in his letter to Eberhard Bethge on 8 June 1944 helps us to connect to Moltmann’s open cosmic understanding of the community of Christ. He writes, “The attack by Christian apologetic on the adulthood of the world I consider to be in the first place pointless, in the second place ignoble, and in the third place unchristian. Pointless, because it seems to me like an attempt to put a grown-up man back into adolescence, i.e., to make him dependent on things on which he is, in fact, no longer dependent, and thrusting him into problems that are, in fact, no longer problems to him. Ignoble, because it amounts to an attempt to exploit man’s weakness for purposes that are alien to him and to which he has not freely assented. Unchristian, because it confuses Christ with one particular stage in man’s religiousness, i.e., with a human law” – see Letters, 327.

636 The tensioned ‘drama of embrace’ here speaks to the ‘broad place’ of God where humanity might ‘be and become’ and live and experience God’s love with or for the other/s in the peace and justice of God. Implied in this ‘broad place’ of peace and justice is a ‘resting’ from works for the sake of God.

637 See the inceptive quote in chapter one from Way, 237.
5/1—The Community of Christ as a Social Trinitarian Tensioned Unity-Across-Diversity

According to Moltmann, we experience the ‘community of Christ’ both *in* the social trinitarian *unity* of God, and “*in* the Tri-unity of God.”\(^{638}\) The preceding explorations have taken up the idea and experience of divine community as ‘unity-across-diversity’ in the triune God. It is an idea of community in ‘unity-across-diversity’ which neither abrogates the one above the many nor the many above the one. We might also term the idea and experience of ‘unity-across-diversity’ as ‘community-across-diversity’. I use either term here without seeking a totality at the cost of diversity. As noted, the triune God in perichoretic ‘unity-across-diversity’ presents to humanity and creation a ‘broad and open place’. This ‘broad place’ tells us that through the *energies of the Holy Spirit of the resurrection* we can creatively understand, engage in, and journey *with* the other/s, the ‘different’ or the ‘unknown’. Moltmann describes this ‘broad place’ “[as] [t]he open space of the perichoretic community of the triune God [which] is the divine living space of the church.”\(^{639}\) We have taken up this ‘broad or open’ place of the Spirit through a three-fold journey of *seeing and knowing*, *hoping*, and *doing*, to show the interrelationship, intersectionality, and interactivity of these three journeys in *unity-across-diversity* for the sake of bringing into view a world of peace and justice.

Moltmann further affirms the continuing idea of a unity-across-diversity of the three core questions or journeys when he writes,

> In order to grasp the process of resurrection, we ought to make it a rule in theology never to separate Kant’s three questions: the theoretical ‘What can I know, the practical ‘What ought I to do?’ and the eschatological ‘What may I hope for?’ These questions have to be answered in relation to one another and therefore together. Only then can we understand the event, the Spirit and the future of the resurrection in their integrated whole.\(^{640}\)

Moltmann’s takes up here the intersectionality and inseparability of Kant’s three questions. He articulates a unity-across-diversity that I have argued in the *seeing and knowing journey* from the tensioned struggle in the cross of Christ (*chapter two*). In the *hoping journey*, I contended for this ‘unity-across-diversity’ from the suspension of dichotomy in the example the child and in Moltmann’s critique of the Aristotelian principle of Likeness (*chapter three*). In the *doing journey*, I argued it from the example of Jesus’s embrace of the world in humility and courage at the public margins of his context (*chapter four*).

I have shown so far that it is the triune God’s *interanimative presence* that enables and energizes the creative human response to the other/s. However, also, that it is the same presence which sustains the creative energies of a unity-across-diversity. It has been necessary to explore what is meant by a theology, sociology, philosophy, and psychology of this *presence* as lived experiences of faith, hope, and love in the world. This presence as *tensioned surplus* (or tensioned exuberant abundance) in the cross-resurrection

---


event sets up the creative energies necessary for a life of peace through a unity-across-diversity in the Spirit in the world. This *tensioned exuberant abundance of creative energies* separates Moltmann’s trinitarian hermeneutics (as an *analogia relationis*) from various prior monistic hermeneutics of an *analogia entis*. Moltmann has pointed us beyond the *analogia entis* to an understanding of the sinner’s condition *and* the close but dissimilar God.\(^{641}\) As intended, the references to the *tensioned* turn to the other/s have arisen from the tension or crisis in the agony of divine love on the cross. My task has been to examine the effect of this tension in a unity-across-diversity as a gradually developing creative energy for *doing* peace and justice in hope and faith.

Moltmann also sees that the resurrection of the crucified Christ ‘catches’ and ‘surprises’ us by its ‘staggering novelty’ in both the *name and titles* of Jesus Christ. Categories of repetition and recollection cannot contain Jesus Christ’s name and titles. His name and titles open the way of creative faith, hope, and love energized by the creative energies of the Holy Spirit of the resurrection.\(^{642}\) These perspectives open here the further explorations of the transitional elements of this study’s three-fold journey *(of seeing and knowing, hoping, and doing)*, and their linkages to potential future continuations.

### 5/2—Transitional Elements and Links to Possible Future Continuations

The three questions of this study’s three-fold journey have brought us so far to what I describe here as a turn to future continuations. So, the turn to ‘continuation’ means that I have not answered the questions or closed off the conversations of this study.

I have searched for a *connection* between the aspects of the three-fold journeys and an open, ongoing tensioned exuberant abundance as a creative energy in humanity and creation. I have sought to make this connection to the ‘creative energies’ of the new-creational life in the Spirit and discussed whether this connection resonates as the work of the Holy Spirit in the world. I have done so by placing Moltmann’s theological vision in conversations with other theological and philosophical interlocutors and one psychologist. I have also drawn on my experience and resultant wondering about the journey to peace and justice in the world. There are thus paths to which this study points of places to go in the future which will need more thinking, more reflection, and more engagement that go beyond the limitations and delimitations of its arguments.

There are limitations to this study. It has, for instance, not focussed at all on certain questions. It did not explain where evil comes from. It did not explain the theological elements of a doctrine of ends or the question according to Moltmann and Blumhardt of why a final reconciliation ‘for all’ follows the so-called idea of final judgment.\(^{643}\) It did not explore the development of a creational grace in relation to Moltmann’s

---


\(^{642}\) See *Crucified*, 105, for a response to Jesus’s question: “Who do you say I am?”

\(^{643}\) See Moltmann, “Logic,” 43-47. Moltmann shows that “Judgment is not God’s last word.”
more ‘eschatological grace’. It did not fully flesh out an anthropodicy regarding how this might inform the continuing violence in the contemporary world. It did not explore the important explorations that may connect a natural ‘tensioned’ socio-psychological topology to the explorations of a ‘tensioned exuberant-abundant’ life for peace in the world. It did not examine the practical outworking of the ‘doing’ of humility in communal relations (religious and secular), or of the nature of a doctrine of sin that examines the work of the grace of a divine love covering over a multitude of sins (see 1 Peter 4:8b). It did not unpack the effects of Ricoeur’s ‘symbolism of evil’. It has not explored the phenomenological aspects of relationship with the triune God as an interanimative dance in trinitarian doxology. It has not related trinitarian doxology to the eucharistic elements of a dynamic ecclesiology of the twos and threes according to Matthew 18:20. It did not explore what this ‘dynamic ecclesiology’ may mean to a fluid and dynamic metamodern context in unfolding plurality. It did not explore a social trinitarian theology for the contemporary world’s unfolding plurality. It has not taken up in-depth discourses of examples where ethics has broken down in the contemporary world through the oppressive and exploitative use of power with its effect of silencing and marginalizing the subjects of its abuses. It did not take up an analysis of the problems of structural sin and metaphysical evil. It did not take up an exploration of Moltmann’s open cosmic christology of the ‘manifest and latent’ community of Christ in its relationship to the religious and secular cultures of the contemporary world. Despite my qualifications of Volf’s ‘embrace of the perpetrator’, his thesis also prompts further developments that may address social, political, economic, and cultural (global and local) instances of intersectionality.

The study’s limitations and delimitations are thus some of the places where specific explorations could go in the future. Implicitly, these ‘potential openings’ are what I may be offering which if explored further may help a learning and growth toward the creative energies of lives lived with or for the other/s.

Ricoeur has helped (as did Moltmann) to tie together Kant’s two questions of ‘what can I know’ to ‘what may I hope for’. He also has thus implicitly situated both seeing and knowing and hope in the context of God’s love in the doing of communion with the other/s. Of course, as noted above, the challenge is to understand what it means to ‘love with or for others’ in a contemporary world of continuing violence. The suggestion, therefore, of further explorations into Ricoeur’s symbolism of evil in the context of a tensioned exuberant-abundant seeing and knowing, hoping, and doing prompt the several following questions: Does the presence of guilt in theology, philosophy, and psychology depend on the idea and experience of stain as substance or essence? Does evil’s outworking not as a nature but as doing affect how we might understand the aspects of guilt and stain? How does evil as doing change how one views guilt and accountability (politically, economically, socially, ecologically, personally, and culturally)? How does a

---

645 See Berdyaev, *Creative*, 18f.
647 The idea and experience of a ‘hope-against-hope’ (or ‘hope-in-tension’) raised in *chapter three* (generally) and *chapter four* (4/2/2) may inform the practice of psychiatry, psychology, and psychotherapy in the contemporary world’s rising problem of worry, depression, hopelessness, and suicidality.
public theology engage ongoing challenges where the deliberate choice is to continue to do evil that causes injury to self and the other/s? How does a ‘tensioned hope’ as ‘sister’ and not ‘enemy’ of despair inform the psychological, physical, and social problems of depression and anxiety in the contemporary world?

This project started with the intent to move toward more dynamic tensional (not excluding the concrete) expressions of theory and theology, and in so doing tried to turn from static to more dynamic expressions without suspending the tensions between them. I have searched for a ‘language of transition’ (to use Ricoeur’s term⁶⁴⁸) that would help the study’s implicit overall themes or tasks of 1) evangelism, 2) public engagement, and 3) personal experience set out in chapter one (1/2). Each of these three factors has undergirded the direction of all that we have discussed and explored so far. These have also aided my trinitarian doxological moves toward understanding the energies of the Spirit of the resurrection for the sake of justice and peace. We now turn to these three tasks in their relationship with the three core journeys of seeing and knowing, hoping, and doing.

5/3—The Three Themes or Tasks in Relationship with the Three Core Journeys

I take up in this brief closing section and its subsections, the connections between the three ‘journeys’ (seeing and knowing, hoping, and doing) and the undergirding themes or tasks of evangelism, public theology/engagement, and personal experience. I have tried in these explorations of the three core journeys:

To contribute to thinking about evangelism (through Christ’s mission of faith, hope, and love in and with the world). To contribute to public engagement (through a public theology of embrace of all via Christ’s hope in and with the other/s), and to contribute to personal experience (through a personally experienced theology made possible in the ‘Pentecost’ energies of the Holy Spirit of the resurrection).

I understand there to be a connection and contribution that each core journey makes to the three themes or ‘tasks’ through the filter of David Bosch’s thesis of mission set out in Transforming Mission. Evangelism, bedded here within the larger mission of God and the church, crosses the frontier between unbelief and faith. That mission involves public engagement for justice and peace which happens through the personal experience of grace (charis and charisma) and hope provided by the Spirit’s creative energies for action. Charles Fensham re-quotes an old Hindu proverb that also emphasizes this kind of non-coercive mission in bold humility,

We do claim a final story albeit in a humble way, acknowledging our own limitations, our own possible misunderstandings, and our own dependence on God as we tell it. Yet tell it we must and tell it we shall. We are, as the Hindu proverb goes, beggars telling other beggars where to find food, but we are beggars that will not be quiet in the excitement of our discovery.⁶⁴⁹

---

⁶⁴⁸ See Ricoeur, Critique, 149-150. Also, Soi-Même, 30-32.
Fensham refers here to the challenge of the critique of coercive meta-narratives in a pluralist context, which I have also tried to address. In taking up the idea of public engagement informed by the three-fold tensioned journeys, I have sought to develop a stance for a Christian engagement of the public sphere. I have tried to engage otherness, identity, religion, philosophy, values, and cultures precisely in the spirit of humility and embrace while keeping an eye on justice. We now turn to the three themes or tasks (5/3/1-5/3/3).

5/3/1—Evangelism in Relationship with the Three Core Journeys

The theme of evangelism speaks of faith in the Good News of Jesus Christ through seeing and knowing via the tensioned exuberant abundance in the Christ-event. Through this same theme, we also see that Jesus Christ brings into view not only seeing and knowing but hoping in or with the other/s as when he breathed on the disciples and said to them, “Receive the Holy Spirit.” We see in the example of Thomas that Christ brought more than faith but also hope despite Thomas’s doubts and fears, and he set him free from his fears to a doing with or for the other/s of evangelism, viz., of sowing the Good News of the resurrection. We also take courage in hope through Jesus’s further response to Thomas’s conversion when Jesus said to him “Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.”

In this reference from the Gospel of John, we find the early church remembering the words of Christ that points them to a doing (through God’s embrace of the world). Jesus speaks to the task of evangelism as a ‘doing’ that crosses the boundary between unbelief and faith. This ‘doing’ as a representative embrace is a conversion through God’s loving embrace of humanity and creation to a love with or for the other/s. In the example of Thomas, I take it that his seeing and knowing of faith in Jesus Christ involves the tension within him between faith and doubt that rises to become his ‘public’ response to Christ’s call to him and the other disciples. Jesus spoke the words, “As the Father sent me, even so send I you” in the moments preceding Thomas’s conversion to a more profound and broad faith in the Holy Spirit of the resurrection when Thomas cried out: “My Lord and my God!” Thomas’s faith neither subsumes nor swallows his doubt. Instead, in the tension of his faith and doubt the work of the Spirit of the resurrection enabled and empowered an exuberant-abundant birthing of new-creational life in him seen by his response of praise.

We might see here that ‘God’s grace’ had humbled Thomas as it did the disciples when Jesus placed the child in their midst as an object lesson of humility. We might also see this hope implicitly or latently

650 John 20:22 ESV.
651 See John 20:24-29.
652 John 20:29 ESV.
653 John 20:21 ESV.
654 John 20:28 ESV.
655 See Matthew 18:1-5.
present in Levine’s ‘little child’ (that exhibits the natural suspension of dichotomy in its lived experience). As noted, this hope is a reminder of the grace the triune God has already made available through his ‘image’ at the inceptive moment of creation.

We might thus understand the evangelistic work of living in faith, hope, and love for the peace and justice of the world (as Christ’s peace and justice in the world) not as a ‘speculative fantasy’ but as the reality of the triune God revealed in the creation through the energies of the Holy Spirit of the resurrection. Moltmann has also shown his understanding of the scriptural statement ‘that God may be all in all’ according to 1 Corinthians 15:28. We might see here in our contemplation with him that it is difficult not to take up an ‘open liberated future of the world’ of peace and justice for all through the mission of love and mercy by the Spirit of Christ in the world. We now turn to the second theme or task of public engagement.

5/3/2—Public Engagement in Relationship with the Three Core Journeys

Jesus’s life and death and resurrection in a public forum (on Golgotha; at the tomb; before ‘many witnesses’) give us a decisive and profound reference point for a theological understanding of the ‘public place’ and for ‘engagement in the public place’. The ‘public place’ is the space in which God’s love in the Spirit of God ‘resides’; waits in the poor and takes up the ‘cries of the lost and broken’. This Spirit works for the world, and from and to and with those who respond in faith to the call to ‘go and do’ (according to the story of the ‘good Samaritan’—see Luke 10:28, 37). This same Spirit of Christ empowers and enables a publicly expressed hope in the other/s and energizes the doing of God’s love for the other/s.

The remembered account of Jesus’s words in Luke 10:28, 37 takes up the call to “go and do”. This call to ‘public engagement’ is a turn through a seeing and knowing of faith and hoping in the other/s to the doing of God’s love with and for the other/s. This call to ‘go and do’ is the intended divine intention of the ‘one’ love of God and neighbor declared by the expert in response to Jesus’s question (see verse 27). This love cannot remain apart from the turn to ‘other’ (human and creational) in the public space. It cannot refuse to take up in humility and service the prophetic tasks of justice in the publics. It awakens personally in community (see 5/3/3 below) and turns us prophetically outward to the publics carrying the concerns of a loving and merciful triune God for the world and its future. The ‘self’ here gets off the ‘throne’ as

---

656 See Moltmann, Science, 16-17.
657 See 1 Corinthians 15:8.
658 The implied reference here is also to the role of the creation in the publics through its anticipations of the work of the Spirit of the resurrection according to Romans 8:22, πᾶσα ἡ κτίσις συστενάζει καὶ συνωδίνει ἁγίῳ τοῦ νόου, “the whole creation groans and suffers the pains of childbirth together up till now.” Dunn, whose translation I use here, in his commentary of this verse, writes [my comment], “Paul’s vision is vivid: creation personified, full of wistful eager longing (like a supporters’ club craning their necks forward to see whether their favorite son has crossed the finish line and their common celebration is assured), all too acutely aware that its own fulfillment is bound up with the entry of God’s sons [sons, daughters, children, people] upon their full inheritance—a transformed creation being part of that inheritance (v 21)” – Romans 1–8, 487; translation, 465.
Volf argues and enters the publics of an ‘unfolding pluralism’ to ‘sit in a chair’ humbly and with courage. It ‘sits among the other/s’ to ‘take up’ the concerns for peace and justice of its *vita christiana*. It sits among’ the other/s to hear and learn from the many ‘voices’ of its world: its neighbors; its politicians; its educators, and economic leaders; its people; its enemies, and its friends.

I return here again to the previously discussed account of the expert who, wanting to justify himself, asked the question: “Who is my neighbor?” Jesus responds by telling the story through a parable about two marginalized people: one a disregarded injured person; the other a despised Samaritan. I read this to mean that Jesus desires here from his hearers a conversion to public engagement—a doing of love with or for the other/s. The end of this account records Jesus repeating his instruction that they ‘go and do’ as had done the Samaritan who did not excuse himself from a caring response of public love and mercy for the other/s (see verses 30-38). It also becomes clear here that we cannot separate God’s love in the Spirit of Christ from a merciful and practical response to the ‘publics’ of the world. This love turns toward the condition of humanity and creation within the ‘publics’ of the world: its poor and victims; its orphans and widows; its cries and longings for freedom; its wants and cares; its needs and its dreams, and its hopes and fears.

Implied also in the close tie reflected between the ‘love of God and neighbor’ and the merciful actions of the ‘good Samaritan’ is a hope in and with the other/s made known in the public spectacle of the cross on Golgotha. Jesus who told the story of the Samaritan’s merciful acts would himself soon take up the fathomless burden of a violent public death for the sake of God’s loving and merciful actions for humanity and creation. The Samaritan’s example might thus be a way to understand the ‘word of the cross’ today through the leading of the Holy Spirit of the resurrection.

God speaks to us also still today of a hope in or with the other/s which I take up here at the close of our explorations through Jesus’s words to Thomas. He said, “Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.” Jesus’s words reflect a hope in the other/s which remains a real presence of the ‘public’ (encompassing the “all”) work of the Holy Spirit despite the cost that this may entail. He refers us to a hope that stays through faith and not necessarily through ‘sight’. In other words, it is a hope in or with the other/s that is present despite what we may or may not see or know of the other/s and what the ‘public’ circumstances may dictate. The Scripture records that it is the same Spirit of Christ who says to the newly awakened Saul on the Damascus road, “Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told to you what you must do.”

The triune God makes possible a hope in humanity and creation through the Spirit of the resurrection. This Saul later renamed Paul, who had previously persecuted the followers of Jesus, would publicly

---

660 John 20:29 ESV.
661 Acts 9:6 KJV.
declare the same Jesus Christ in the cities and countries of his day. He too would live out the public engagement of his faith in Christ empowered by the Spirit in the presence of many witnesses.

This study’s theme or task of ‘public engagement’ through the Spirit articulates here a ‘broad place’ through the Spirit. This kind of ‘receiving in the broad place’ of the resurrection, references the hope for the welfare of every individual and the creation and speaks to the order of public society. This ‘broad place’ is of the Spirit and where the Spirit speaks and works to give a voice to the silent; solidarity to the victims; dignity to the marginalized and hope to the broken. The Spirit of the resurrection resists the oppression and exploitation of humanity and creation. The Book of Acts, noted above, articulates this ‘liberation’ of the other/s in the public space through the energies of the Holy Spirit of the resurrection, which brings us to our third theme or task.

5/3/3—Personal Experience in Relationship with the Three Core Journeys

Some aspects of my early circumstances may situate the implied undergirding emphasis of this study’s theme of a ‘personally experienced theology’. My struggles to integrate as a French Catholic immigrant in South Africa in the late 60s and 70s, was to bring me face to face with a social dysfunction of exclusion, alienation, and rejection that stood in contrast to a peaceful early family life on the Island of Mauritius—although my earlier years were not without personal difficulty.

At the age of two, it had become clear that I had a chronic form of asthma. This disease persisted throughout my childhood until my late-twenties. I labored to breathe most days and nights which forced me to sleep crouched on my knees. My earliest recollection, as a 4-5-year-old, was of my father’s constant presence at my bedside. He spent those hours most nights rubbing my back to ease my breathing. His gentleness during those difficult years may have sowed the seeds that steered me toward choosing a life of service to others. My parents were God-loving people who lived a practical faith. From an early age, I recall people arriving at our house often late at night to ask for prayer. Although I was not aware of it at the time, the island of Mauritius was in severe political turmoil, and my father’s management role in a sugar mill and estate exposed him to some of the difficulties of this situation. After receiving several threats, my parents decided to leave for South Africa for the safety of our family. This displacement was to have a significant effect on my future—it brought me face to face with the injustice of racism in Apartheid politics.

As a teenager in South Africa, I became increasingly aware of the strains of hate and abuse that were occurring as much on our school playgrounds as through the country’s politics of racism. Consequently, opposition to such things grew in my heart. As time went on, I almost lost complete hope in the world and myself. My daily physical struggles included the continuing issue of my asthma which had worsened to several near-death anaphylactic attacks. In my early twenties, I no longer attended church and began to...

---

experience bouts of deep depression until I experienced God in a personal way. Though I was a Christian most of my life, God’s voice became real to me through several intimate personal encounters. It opened my heart to an experience of God’s grace; steered me toward a public experiential theology and a desire for a personal experiential theology. My personal story as also every personal story of faith and hope is the fruit of the work of the Holy Spirit whereby we might have in ourselves the strength, courage, and joy to rise in new faith, hope, and love with or for the other/s.

The account also of Saul/Paul taken up above has pointed us so far to this the third implied theme or task of this study: of a personally experienced relationship in the Holy Spirit of the resurrection. The Holy Spirit was the one who had awakened him to a seeing and knowing of faith and to new-creational hoping and doing of God’s love with and for the other/s. His personally experienced ‘faith, hope and love’ (as well as in Thomas and the other disciples) is the work of the Spirit of Christ who enables the believers today to turn in a seeing and knowing, hoping, and doing of God’s love for or with the other/s for the sake of a world of peace and justice.

Paul’s personally experienced faith was soon to bring him ‘face to face’ with the despair and suffering of persecution for the sake of Christ’s gospel of peace in the world. It brought him face to face with the ‘tensioned-struggled’ turn to the other/s; the enemy, and the poor and broken but also face to face with the encouragement of the Spirit of Christ who strengthened him and equipped him in his doing with and for the other/s. Through his encounter with the Spirit, he spoke of God as the bringer of the ‘how much more’ of an exuberant-abundant hope through God’s grace and righteousness to the world experienced by faith in Christ (see Romans 5:10-17). He personally and communally experienced the gospel of Jesus Christ through a new seeing and knowing of the Spirit for the sake of the Spirit leading him to hope in the other/s and to a doing of God’s love for the liberation of humanity and creation.

This work of the Spirit as personally experienced in a seeing and knowing, hoping, and doing is neither a forced (imposed) movement from heaven to earth nor a fleeing from earth back to heaven. Instead, it is a trinitarian doxology of cosmic panentheism of God in world and world in God. Paul personally experienced this Holy Spirit of the resurrection and partook with others from the charis to the charismata as seen, for instance, in the gifts and fruit of the Spirit. Put differently, these gifts and fruit are God’s creative energies seen and known and are what the creation hopes for. As Moltmann also contends,

Where Jesus is, there is life. That is what the Synoptic gospels tell us. Where Jesus is, sick people are healed, sad people are comforted, marginalized people are accepted, and the demons of death are

664 Space has not allowed for an in-depth exploration into the aspects of Moltmann’s eschatological trinitarian panentheism. See chapter one (first paragraphs and notes). See also the excellent summary of Moltmann’s position in Bauckham – Theology, 242-247. For the relation between ‘God in world’ and ‘world in God’ – see Moltmann, “The World,” 35-41; God in, 98-103.
665 See the gifts set out in 1 Corinthians 12:1-12, and fruit of the Spirit set out in Galatians 5:22-24. As Dunn who references S. Schulz also affirms, “It is a striking fact, worth noting once again, that Paul can so confidently take it for granted that congregations he had neither founded nor visited would be charismatic (“Paul knows only the charismatic community” – Schulz…)” – Romans 9–16, 726.
The Spirit’s energies experienced personally and communally as charis and charismata is in a sense God’s presence as response to all forms of apathy, exploitation, oppression, alienation, and destruction. Moltmann writes, “It is the invitation to God’s future and to hope for the new creation of all things.”

The Holy Spirit’s energies in charis and charismata announce God’s intent as already foretold that God ‘is making all things new.’ The idea that we can believe in God without also evidences of both the fruit of the Spirit listed in Galatians 5:22-24 and the grace gifts of 1 Corinthians 12:1-13 (and Romans 12:2-8) seems foreign to Paul’s understanding of the resurrection’s new-creational life in the Spirit of Christ.

Through our experience of God, we might personally and communally see and know and hope for and live then also with Bonhoeffer for a coming into view of a ‘religionless Christianity’. We might say that this ‘religionless Christianity’ was for him a ‘coming of age’ of a new way of seeing and knowing, hoping, and doing that “leads us to a true recognition of our situation before God.”

I have contended for a ‘grace’ today of the call to all for the sake of peace and justice. I framed this call in the three themes or tasks of evangelism, public engagement, and personal experience as the undergirding themes or tasks of this study’s three-fold journeys of seeing and knowing, hoping, and doing. I have taken up with Moltmann a journey of faith, hope, and love in the open and ‘broad place’ of God—enlivened, encouraged, and guided by the energies of the Holy Spirit. However, the next explorations, or continuations, remain yet open as to how we might journey without falling short in either the questions of essentialism and coercive grand narratives or to a loss of ‘life’ expression and purpose in the creative energies of the Holy Spirit of the resurrection. As intended, I have searched for the helpful signposts of all that God has planned and makes possible for the journey home with the Holy Spirit.

The personally experienced turn to the Spirit which I have described here also stands for a continuing search for responses that we may each find in the resurrection life of Christ—of a healing as it were. This healing begins for everyone through the ‘word of the cross’ at the very place of the wound but does not end until all creation finds its home in the rest of God.

This path home is set here in humanity and creation created in the image of God, through the theological understanding of the triune God as the inclusive and just and merciful and loving God. I have explored this journey from the ‘word of the cross’ (seen through the tensioned exuberant abundance of the resurrection life in the energies of the Spirit). I have sought to show that a path exists for every person to take up the actions of liberation in a tensioned unity-across-diversity with or for the other/s…

666 Moltmann, Source, 18-19.
667 Moltmann, Source, 21.
668 See Bonhoeffer, Letters, 360.
With the drawing of this Love and the voice of this
Calling

We shall not cease from exploration
And the end of all our exploring
Will be to arrive where we started
And know the place for the first time.
Through the unknown, unremembered gate
When the last of earth left to discover
Is that which was the beginning;
At the source of the longest river
The voice of the hidden waterfall
And the children in the apple-tree
Not known, because not looked for
But heard, half-heard, in the stillness
Between two waves of the sea.
Quick now, here, now, always—
A condition of complete simplicity
(Costing not less than everything)
And all shall be well and
All manner of thing shall be well
When the tongues of flame are in-folded
Into the crowned knot of fire
And the fire and the rose are one.
(Last stanza of T. S. Eliot’s *Four Quartets*)
Bibliography

Primary Resources—Books, Parts of Books, and Articles


Secondary Resources—Books, Parts of Books, and Articles


Berger, Peter L. “A Market Model for the Analysis of Ecumenicity.” *Social Research* 30/1 (1963), 77-88. Periodicals Archive Online.


Dumortier, J. M. Many in this City are my People. Durban, ZA: Young Christian Workers, 1983.


Metzler, Norman. The Trinity in Contemporary Theology: Questioning the Social Trinity. *Concordia Theological Quarterly* 67/3-4 (July/October 2003), 270-287.


*NET Bible notes.* Copyright © 1996-2006 by Biblical Studies Press L.L.C.


The King James Version of the Bible with Apocrypha. Originally published in 1611. Quotations abbreviated as “KJV”.


Volf, Miroslav. “‘The Trinity is our ‘Social program’: The Doctrine of the Trinity/ and the Shape of Social Engagement.” *Modern Theology*, 14/3 (July 1998), 403-423.


