

A BALANCED PERSPECTIVE OF THE GOSPEL

Presented in a diagrammatic overview
of Christian theology

*“The Christ of History
is the
Christ of Experience”*

Presented by:

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GOD – Creator

(Difficulty of placing God in the diagram.
Diagram is space/time: space (in/out); time (beginning/end)
God is infinite and eternal. Beyond space/time
Omni-locative and omni-temporal.

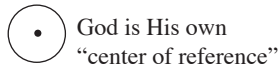
Divine Being – Intrinsic Being

“I AM that I AM” - Exod. 3:14
What/Who God *is*, only God *is*.
Singular - One God - Deut. 6:4
Trinity - Three Persons in one Being.
Infinite (Ps. 139:7,8); Eternal (Ps. 102:12)
Absolute - What God is, only God is!
Holy - “set apart” from all that is not Him.
Love - I Jn. 4:8,16; basis of all genuine interpersonal relationships
Spirit - Jn. 4:24; worthy of all worship

Divine function (doing)

God *does* what He *does*, because He *is* who He *is*.
God acts out of His own Being - *ek autos*; *ek theos*
God is the only Independent Self or Being
Independent, Autonomous
Self-determinative; Self-generative
God alone has absolute “free-will”
Self-revealing - Matt. 11:27; II Tim. 1:9,10

Distinction – *either/or*
God is God; man is man
“Infinite qualitative difference”
- Soren Kierkegaard
God is “wholly other” than
man, but this does not disallow
personal relationship.



God is His own
“center of reference”

* **Prime function:**
Activity – GRACE
God acts like God

Objective

SATAN – creature

Spirit-being – extrinsic being. No dualism - not co-equal with God.

Not infinite divine being; not finite human being. Trans-locative; trans-temporal

Derivative creature - not capable of generating own character.

Choosing creature: Lucifer and other angels (Rev. 12:4) rejected derivation from God’s character.

(cf. Isa. 14:12-19; Ezek. 28:11-19; Rev. 12:3-9)

Rebellion and opposition to God.

Where did such apparently underived rebellion and selfishness originate? This is the “ultimate incongruity” of theodicy – how evil originated in God’s good creation.

Selfish arrogance and pride, desiring to “be like the Most High God” (Isa. 14:14), was enacted in sinful revolt against God (II Pet. 2:4; Ezek. 28:16).

Still a derivative creature, but takes what is of God and reverses in negation. Seeks to distort and abort, misuse and abuse, pervert and invert everything God has created for His glory.

Satan “makes crooked the straight ways of the Lord” - Acts 13:10

Lucifer became Satan - the fixed “negative of God’s positive;” the opposing, antagonist of God.

• enemy - Matt. 13:28,39; I Tim. 5:14

• adversary - I Pet. 5:8

• Evil one - Matt. 6:13; 13:19,38; I Jn 2:13,14

• destroyer - I Cor. 10:10; Rev. 9:11

• liar - Jn. 8:44 (lie of “independent self”)

• spirit of antichrist - I Jn. 2:18,22; 4:3

Personified etiology of evil. Origin of sin and selfishness

“god of this age” - II Cor. 4:4; destiny: hell (Matt. 25:41)

* **Prime function:**
Negativity – reversal
Deception: Rev. 12:9; 20:8,10

MAN – creature

Human being – extrinsic being

Not divine being (a god); not spirit-being (angel)

Not an “independent self,” as only God is.

Derivative creature - cannot generate character.

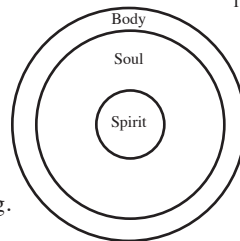
Choosing creature - has freedom of choice

concerning his derivation. Not free-will.

Personal being capable of relating to divine Being.

Spiritual (spirit), psychological (soul), and

physical (body) function comprises humanness.



Genesis 2:7
I Thess. 5:23
Heb. 4:12

Two trees: Gen. 2:9,17; 3:1-6



Derivative man was given a choice of derivation:

Tree of life – choice to derive divine out-working of the divinely in-breathed life of God.

Tree of knowledge of good and evil – choice to reject divine derivation from God.

Fall of Man – Genesis 3

Diabolic serpent tempted Adam and Eve - (Gen. 3:1-5; Rev. 12:9)

• “Did God say you cannot eat?” (3:1-3) - T or F? One tree forbidden (2:17). All others “eat freely” (2:16)

• “You will not die!” (3:4) T or F? - God said, “dying you will die” (2:17). Did they die? How? What is death?

Is death separation? (Eph. 2:12; 4:18) Is death absence/privation of God’s life? (Jude 19) Is death vacuum?

Is death personified? “Death reigned...” (Rom. 5:21); “one having power of death ... devil” (Heb. 2:14)

• “You will be like God, knowing good and evil” (3:5) - T or F? Does God know good and evil? (3:22-24) How?

• **LIE** of Satan was that man could be his own “center of reference,” like God. – an autonomous “independent self.”

This is the fallacy of humanistic philosophy - that man can be self-determinative and self-generative, the

“cause of his own effects,” “the source of his own character,” “the determiner of his own destiny” –

The attempt to be the self-help for his own “self” problem creates the most self-destructive dilemma.

Human beings were deceived (II Cor 11:3; Rev. 12:9), blinded (II Cor. 4:4), thinking they were the source

of their own selfishness and sinfulness, when in reality they cannot be self-generative, and it was Satan who

was energizing his ego-centric self-orientation (cf. Isa. 14:14) and sinful character (cf. I Jn. 3:8) in mankind.

Fallen man: “natural man” (I Cor. 2:14; Jude 19; James 3:15); “in Adam” (Rom. 5:12-21; I Cor. 15:22);

spiritually dead (Eph. 2:1,5; Heb. 2:14); “in the Evil one” (I Jn. 5:19); has Satanic spirit (Eph. 2:2; I Jn. 4:6);

“slave to sin” (Jn. 8:34; Rom. 6:16); derives sinful character from Satan (I Jn. 3:8,10,12).

Fallen man is not inherently evil. He is not a devil!

Such biblical explanation is a denial of the humanistic premise *en toto*.

GOD in man from creation

Life of God breathed into man - Gen. 2:7

“breath/spirit of life” - *n’shamah* (cf. Prov. 22:7)

Presence of God to “image” God’s character. Gen. 1:26,27

Created for His glory - Isa. 43:7; cf. Isa. 42:8; 48:11

* **Prime function:**
Receptivity – FAITH

Subjective

Incarnational conundrum

God is God; man is man. God is “wholly other” than man.

There is a diametric polarity of *either/or* between God and man.

- Essential constitutional difference - divine being & human being.
- Essential functional difference - God is independent; man is dependent.
- Estranged relational alienation - man separated from God as enemy.

How can the diametric polarity of an *either/or* become a dialectic reciprocity of a *both/and* reality? Impossible by human logic or action.

Soren Kierkegaard called this “The Absolute Paradox”

Only God, by His grace, could initiate and enact the *both/and* reality of the God-man in the incarnation of His only begotten Son, Jesus Christ.

Only God could counteract Satan’s power and forgive sin.

Only man could take the death consequence of sin. God cannot die!

The justice of God and the love of God are not incompatible.

GOD-MAN

Divine Being and human being were simultaneously conjoined in the one person of Jesus Christ.

- Fully God - Jn. 1:1; 5:18; Phil. 2:6; Col. 2:9; Titus 2:13
 - Fully man - Acts 2:22; I Cor. 15:21; Phil. 2:7,8; I Tim. 2:5
- “Never less that God; never more than man.”

Hypostatic union of divine nature and human nature in an indivisible unity. *Theanthropos*.

Commenced in the “fulness of time” (Gal. 4:4), and enacted when “the Word became flesh” (Jn. 1:14) in the incarnation. (Rom. 8:3; I Tim. 3:16; I Jn. 1:1,2).

Objective

Jesus Christ

Perfect in Benefaction – providing what fallen human beings needed.

Had Jesus only been perfect in being and behavior, He would have been a matchless example, which would have condemned us all the more because of our incapability of such behavior. Jesus did not come to condemn us morally, but to become condemnation for us vicariously in the substitutional death on the cross “in our place,” representing us.

Undeserving of death, He was “obedient to the point of death, even the cross” - (Phil. 2:8) Jesus came to die! (Matt. 20:28; I Peter 3:18) ... to be “perfect in benefaction.”

Why did Jesus have to die? Was death intrinsic to humanity?

Death was the consequence of sin (Gen. 2:17; Rom. 6:23); the alternative to God’s life. Whereas Adam’s disobedience at the “tree of the knowledge of good and evil” made all

mankind “sinners” (Rom. 5:19) with the consequence of death (Rom. 5:12), Christ’s “obedience” (Rom. 5:19) at the “tree” (Gal. 3:13) of the cross allowed Him to be “made sin” (II Cor. 5:21) on our behalf to take the death consequence for all men.

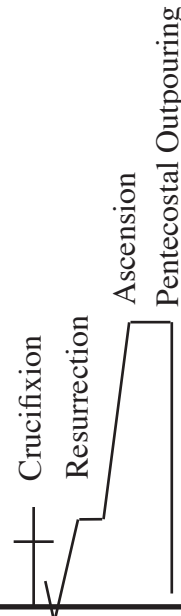
Jesus, the Last Adam, incurred all the consequences that had occurred in the first Adam.

Remedial redemption – By His death by crucifixion Jesus “paid the price” (I Cor. 6:20; 7:23) of taking mankind’s death, and removed the stinging consequence of death for sin. Impossible for Jesus to be held in death’s power - Acts 2:24; cf. Heb. 2:14

Restorative resurrection – Declared Son of God with power by resurrection - Rom. 1:4 Jesus took our death, that we might have His life, restoring humanity to God’s intent.

“First-born from the dead” (Col. 1:18; Rev. 1:5), “...among many brethren” (Rom. 8:29) Life out of death - Jn. 12:24. Jesus became the “life-giving Spirit” (I Cor 15:45).

“It is finished” (Jn. 19:30). Jesus overcame “power of death” (Heb 2:14; Col 2:15; I Jn 3:8



Incarnation

Burial

Perfect in Behavior – the experiential manifestation of Divine character in human behavior.

How did Jesus live the life that He lived? God does everything by His own independent initiative.

Jesus repeatedly declares, “I do nothing of Mine own initiative” (Jn. 5:30; 8:28; 12:49; 14:10). Although He *was* God, He did not function independently *as* God, but rather functioned as a man choosing to be subordinate to, dependent on, and receptive to (faith), God the Father for every expression of divine character in His human behavior.

Functioning as a man, Jesus was subject to temptation, suffering, and death (Heb. 2:18).

“Tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin” (Heb. 4:15). “Flesh” patternings?

Could Jesus have chosen to sin? Was He impeccable? Tempted as a man.

Jesus was sinless – Jn. 8:46; II Cor. 5:21; Heb. 7:26; 9:14; I Peter 1:19; 2:22; I John 3:5.

How did Jesus avoid sinning as a human being? Did He have some ability that we do not have?

Perfect behavior is not merely the avoidance of sin expression. Perfect behavior is only the result of the Perfect God allowed to express His perfect character perfectly in human behavior.

• By faith, the receptivity of God’s activity, the man, Jesus Christ, allowed God the Father to function in His behavior for every moment in time for thirty-three years – Perfect behavior.

“The Father abiding in Me does His works” (Jn. 14:10; cf. 5:19,36; 7:16; 12:44,45,50; 17:8)

Was it as God that Jesus performed miracles? “God performed through Him” (Acts 2:22).

Jesus was “the image of God” (II Cor. 4:4; Col. 1:15). The invisible character of God was “imaged” perfectly in the visible behavior of the human Jesus. God was acting in a faithfully receptive man.

There was still a sense in which Jesus needed to be made “perfect” – Heb. 2:9,10; 5:8,9

* Ultimate Christian cop-out: “Jesus could live like He did, because He was God, but I am just human, and cannot be expected to so live.

What did the Son “empty Himself” of (*kenosis* - Phil. 2:7) when He became a man? deity? omni-attributes? glory?

- He emptied Himself of the right and prerogative of independent divine function and initiative – *ek theos*.

Divine function: independent, self-determinative, self-generative.

Human function: dependent, contingent, derivative, receptive.

Jesus could *BE* God and *BE* man simultaneously, but it is not possible to *BEHAVE* as God and *BEHAVE* as man simultaneously, for the functions of God and man are mutually opposite.

Perfect in Being

Divine Being and human being were perfectly conjoined in the person of Jesus.

What does it mean that Jesus came “in the likeness of sinful flesh?” (Rom. 8:3)

If Jesus was fully human, how did He avoid the spiritual death condition predicated to all men based on Adam’s disobedience? (Rom. 5:12-21)

Jesus was the “second man” (I Cor. 15:47) born with only God as his father.

“proceeded forth and came from God” - *ek theos* - (Jn. 8:42)

Supernaturally conceived by Spirit (Matt. 1:20; Lk. 1:34,35) - Virgin birth.

Jesus Christ was “perfect in being” because the “Perfect Being,” God the Father, was indwelling “the man, Christ Jesus” (Acts 2:22; I Tim. 2:5)

Jesus said, “the ruler of this world has nothing in Me” (John 14:30).

Jesus was superior to the “first Adam,” for He was incarnate deity.

Subjective

Objective

Restoration of God's Life in Man Christ in the Christian

Need of Mankind

Helpless, hopeless condition of fallen mankind.
 "God is not willing that any perish" (II Pet. 3:9)
 Nothing man could do to remedy his predicament:
 - Not reason, resolution, renunciation, or religion.
 The need of fallen mankind, being "dead in trespasses and sins" (Eph. 2:1,5), was to be relieved with the Life of God in a human person.
 Human beings needed to be re-generated 2:7 – "breath/spirit of life breathed into them"
 Divine life cannot be purchased - cannot be earned.

Life in the Spirit of Christ

Jesus' disciples were to receive power when Holy Spirit came - Acts 1:8; I Cor. 1:24
 Jesus promised "another" (*allos* - of same kind) - the Spirit - Jn. 14:16,17; 17:26,28
 The "last Adam" is the "life-giving Spirit" - I Cor. 15:45
 The Lord (Jesus) is the Spirit - II Cor. 3:17; Phil. 1:19
 The Spirit gives life - II Cor. 3:6
 Jesus is the Life - Jn. 14:6; Jn. 11:25; I Jn. 5:12,13; Jn. 10:10
 Spirit of Christ in receptive spirit - essence of being Christian
 Rom. 8:9 - "if any man hath not Spirit of Christ, he is none of His"
 Rom. 8:16 - "Spirit bears witness with our spirit that we are child of God"
 Gal. 4:6 - "God sent forth the Spirit of His Son into our hearts"
 Gal. 2:20 - "it is no longer I who lives, but Christ who lives in me..."
 Col. 1:27 - "this is the mystery, Christ in you the hope of glory"
 Eph. 3:17 - "Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith"
 II Cor. 13:5 - "do you not recognize that Jesus Christ is in you...unless believed in vain."
 Jesus Christ - first-born among many brethren - Rom. 8:29 - cf. Col. 1:18
 Born as He was born - from death to life - Acts 13:33

Incarnation

Crucifixion

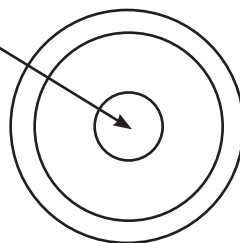
Resurrection

Ascension

Pentecostal Outpouring

The only way to be restored with God's life is to be BORN into such life.
 Jn 1:12,13 - "As many as received Him ... born of God"
 Jn. 3:1-6 - "You must be born again (from above)...of the Spirit"
 I Peter 1:3 - "born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead."
 I Peter 1:23 - "born again of imperishable seed"
 I John 2:29; 3:9 - "born of Him ... of God" – God's divine life.

We receive the Person and life of Jesus Christ by faith - John 1:12,13; Eph. 2:8-10
 New Birth - "born again" - John 3:16; I Peter 1:3, 23; I Jn. 2:29; 3:9
 Made alive together with Christ - Eph. 2:5; Rom. 6:4
 Raised up with Him - Eph. 2:6; Col. 2:12; 3:1
 Out of death into life - Jn. 5:24; I Jn. 3:14
 United in the likeness of His resurrection - Rom. 6:5
 Radical exchange of regeneration - Acts 26:18; Col. 1:13
 Eternal life is His life in us - Jn. 3:15,16,26; 17:3; I Jn. 1:2; 5:11,13,20
 Power of His resurrection-life - Eph. 1:18-20; Phil. 3:10; Eph. 3:20



CONTRASTS

in	I Jn. 5:19	II Cor. 5:17
in	Eph. 2:2	II Cor. 13:5
out of	I Jn. 3:8	II Cor. 3:5
nature	Eph. 2:3	II Pet. 1:4
treasure	Matt. 12:35	II Cor. 4:7
authority	Acts 26:18	Matt. 28:18
energy	Eph. 2:2	Phil. 2:13
father	Jn. 8:44	Rom. 8:15
child	I Jn. 3:10	Rom. 8:16
son	Matt. 13:38	Gal. 3:26
power	Rev. 13:2	I Cor. 1:24
wisdom	James 3:15	I Cor. 1:30

God, the Father, within us:

Jn. 14:23; II Cor. 6:16

Jesus Christ in us:

Jn. 14:20; 17:23; II Cor. 13:5;
 Eph. 3:17; Col. 1:27; I Jn. 3:24

Holy Spirit in us:

Rom. 8:11; I Cor. 2:12; 3:16;
 II Cor. 1:22; Phil. 1:19; II Tim. 1:14;
 Heb. 6:4; James 4:5; I Jn. 3:24; 4:13

Derivative Life

Derived sp. condition - I Cor. 2:12; I Jn. 4:6; Eph. 2:2/Rom. 8:9,11
 Derived death/life - Heb. 2:14; Eph. 2:1,5 / Col. 3:4; Phil. 1:21; Gal. 2:20
 Derived sp. nature - Eph. 2:3 / II Pet. 1:4 — Not two natures - schizophrenic
 Derived identity - I Jn. 3:10. Sinner - Rom. 5:19 / Saint - Rom. 8:27
 Old man - Rom. 6:6; Eph. 4:22; Col. 3:9 / New man - Eph. 4:24; Col. 3:10
 New creature in Christ - II Cor. 5:17
 Derived character - Matt. 12:35.
 Sinfulness - I Jn. 3:8 / Righteousness - Rom. 5:21; I Cor. 1:30; II Cor. 5:21
 Selfishness - Phil. 2:3-5 / Love - Rom. 5:5; Gal. 5:22
 Derived image - Col. 3:10; Rom. 8:29; II Cor. 3:18
 Derived immortality - I Tim. 6:15,16; II Tim. 1:10

Subjective

Objective

Christian History Part 1

Incarnation

Crucifixion
Resurrection

Ascension
Pentecost

Though not denying the objective theological implications of Christ's Person and work, the Eastern and Western portions of the Church of Jesus Christ developed quite different approaches to the subjective implications of the presence and function of the living Christ in the lives of individual Christians and the Church.

EASTERN CHURCH – ORTHODOX

The original language of the New Testament was *koine* (common) Greek. This was the primary language employed by the earliest leaders, thinkers, and participants of the church of Jesus Christ through the first three to four centuries. The gospel theme of “Christ in you” (*Christos en humin* - Col. 1:27) was (and is) a common emphasis.

Cyprian (?-258) stated, “What man is, Christ was willing to be – so that man might also be what Christ is” (*Treatise VI*). Athanasius (A.D. 293-373), the great advocate for the Christian conception of the Triune God (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit) at the Council of Nicea (A.D. 325), writing *On the Incarnation* (54:3) explained “The Son of God became man so that man might become God.”

The theology of the Greek-speaking churches remains in the Eastern Orthodox churches to this day (Greek, Russian, Serbian, etc.). Emphasizing “union with Christ” (I Cor. 6:17), “participation in the divine nature” (I Pet. 1:4), and the Christian's life “hid with Christ in God” (Col. 3:3), Orthodox Christians refer to *theosis* (sometimes translated “divinization” or “deification”), meaning a Christian's participatory union with the living Christ. This is their concept of “salvation.” They do not mean that the Christian participates in an ontological union with the essence of divine Being (*ousia*), but that we participate in a relational and operational union with the energies (*energeia*) of the divine Christ – the dynamic grace of God in Christ.

Progressing from purification (cleansing), to illumination (revelation), to participation (*theosis*), the individual Christian's “knowledge of God” moves from orthodox thought to the orthopraxy of practical expression of Christ's life and character.

The Eastern Orthodox Church split from the Western Roman Catholic church in 1054 over the issue of *filioque*, whether the Spirit proceeds from both Father and Son.

The thought and practices of the Orthodox churches may seem foreign to Western Christians. There is much emphasis on iconography, on nationalistic/ethnic loyalties, and on the corporate identity of the church, as well as legalistic behavioral performance. But the emphasis on the spiritual interiority of the indwelling presence and union with Christ in the participatory intimacy of *theosis* retains a more subjective and experiential emphasis than does much of Western Christian thought.

WESTERN CHURCH – CATHOLIC

Tracing the roots of its papal hierarchy of apostolic succession back to the Apostle Peter (Matt. 16:18,19), the Roman Catholic Church developed structured organizational form after the Roman Emperor Constantine I converted to Christian faith in A.D. 325.

The Latin Church of the West which formed into the Roman Catholic Church developed doctrinal definitions that were more logically formulated than the Eastern Church. Augustine (A.D. 354-430) was influenced by Ambrose (A.D. 337-397) to articulate the Christian faith in dualistic and deterministic forms. Faith assumed the form of a *credo* of assent to Christian history and theology, and the praxis of such faith was externalized in the sacramental rituals of the church.

As is the natural tendency of most religious practice, performance incentives and standards were developed by which the Christian was encouraged to please God and achieve righteousness. The doctrine of “infused grace” (*gratia infusa*) explained that God could interject supernatural strength to the Christian person so that he/she could perform the commandments, follow Jesus' example, and “imitate Christ” (a Kempis). Such supplemental divine assistance could be sequentially obtained by regular participation in the sacrament of the Eucharist. By the transubstantiation (Greek - *metousiosis*) of the bread and wine into the body and blood of Jesus, the “real presence” of the living Christ could be experienced as “a means of grace” to stimulate righteous function in the behavior of the Christian, which would merit additional favor from God. Failure to avail oneself of this enabling grace of God could be corrected by the penance of contrition, confession, and absolution, as well as by the acquisition of indulgences to facilitate the cleansing purgation of sins in purgatory.

Correlated with the external emphases of participation in sacramental means of divine enabling, the Roman Catholic Church continued(s) to teach that God makes a person of faith into a righteous and holy person by putting the righteous character of Christ into the Christian's heart. The presence of God's Spirit within (effected at baptism) causes the believer to become a Christian, and by the indwelling Spirit of Christ that person is enabled and empowered to cooperate with God in order to live as God intends, to the glory of God.

Despite the divinely facilitated meritorious works of religious performance, Roman Catholic teaching retained a recognition of interiority whereby God's work in Christ continues to be subjectively applied to the Christian believer. The writings of various Catholic devotional writers have emphasized this truth.

Subjective

WESTERN CHURCH – PROTESTANT

Objective

Protestant Church Reaction

The Protestant reformers reacted to the Roman Catholic concept of effecting righteous behavior by divinely-aided “works” of righteousness. The means they chose to avoid all meritorious performance of “good works” was to project the entire process of God’s work in Jesus Christ to a theological explanation entirely outside of the experience of the believing individual. Failing to distinguish the concept of subjectively applied “infused grace” from the externally enacted performance of “works righteousness,” the reformers “threw the baby out with the bathwater” and reverted to an one-sided extreme of detached objectivity that conceptualized the work of Christ in abstracted thought-categories.

Protestant Church Teaching

Retaining a law-based contextualization of Christian thought, the reformers still conceived of God primarily as a legal judge. God was viewed not merely as a punitive judge determined to exact vengeful penalties on men’s failures to perform the Law, but as a merciful judge willing to pardon human failures by imputing sinners’ sins to Jesus and imputing the righteousness of Jesus Christ to sinners.

In the heavenly courtroom the divine Judge could bring down His gavel on the bench and declare a person pardoned, acquitted, exonerated – absolved from culpability and guilt for sin. On the basis of Christ’s work the Judge could declare a person “righteous” by imputing Christ’s righteousness to that individual as an undeserved gift of grace. Reacting to performance “works” of righteousness, Luther insisted on an “alien righteousness” that was so alien, foreign and incompatible it could not be assimilated in mankind.

In the heavenly bookkeeping department the divine keeper of the ledger could “reckon” Christ’s righteousness to our account. “On the books” an individual name could be transferred from the liability column to the asset column in the divine ledger-book of life.

On the heavenly social register an elect believer could be accepted and adopted as a part of the “family of God” – regarded henceforth as a “child” and a “son” of God.

On the heavenly parade grounds a Christian assumed a new placement or position – a new “status” and “standing” before God as a “chosen one” identified with Christ.

On the basis of these legal and juridical transactions on the heavenlies, God now sees the “elect” individual “as if” he is cloaked in Christ’s righteousness. The question has legitimately been asked, “If God sees us “as if” we are righteous, we are not really righteous, is this just a “legal fiction” of projected benefits?

Alister McGrath explains, “Luther...introduced a decisive break in the theological tradition as a whole by insisting that in justification, man is *intrinsically* sinful yet *extrinsically* righteous. “This is a theological *novum* which distinguishes between justification and regeneration; a distinction which had not existed previously. “Justification was defined as a forensic *declaration* that the believer is righteous, rather than the process by which he is *made* righteous; a change of *status* rather than *nature*.”

Protestant over-objectification does not allow for any real relationalism with God in Christ by the intrapersonal presence of the Triune God in Christians. It produces an ideological belief-system that can only advocate external ethical conformity.

Protestant Church Denial of Subjective Experience of Christ

Protestants have adamantly denied that a Christian is “made” or “becomes” righteous – or changed in any way. Martin Luther - “The Christian is simultaneously both (*extrinsically*) righteous and (*intrinsically*) sinner.”

D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones - “Justification makes no actual change in us; it is a declaration. The Christian is not a good man; he is a vile wretch saved by the grace of God.”

Alister McGrath - “Protestant justification involves the alien righteousness of Christ imputed to the believer, external to him, not located in him, or in any way belonging to him.”

How is a Protestant Christian to live? The objective benefits have no affect on who we are, or how we live. The best he can do is to “reckon” that God has “reckoned” him “righteous” via a “positive thinking” process.

Post-reformation Catholic theologians chided the Protestants: “If a Protestant Christian were ever to act righteously, the Protestants would have to attribute such to ‘works,’ for his theology makes no provision for any subjective resource of divine dynamic.”

Subjective

Christian History Part 2

Critiques of Protestant thought

Catholic

Council of Trent (1545-1563) - “Not only are we reputed just, but we are denominated just, and we *are* just.”

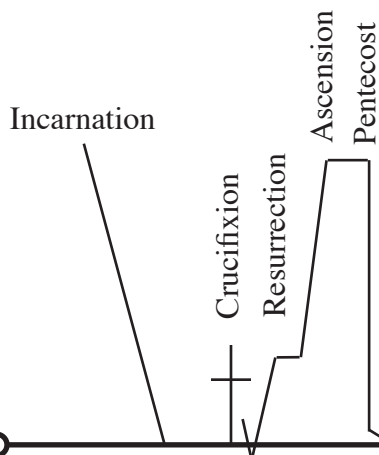
Hans Kung - Justification is not merely an externally pasted-on ‘as if.’ Man is not only *called* just but he *is* just.”

Protestant

John Nevins - How can that be imputed or reckoned to any man on the part of God, which does not belong to him in reality? The Bible knows nothing of a simply outward imputation, by which something is reckoned to a man that does not belong to him in fact.”

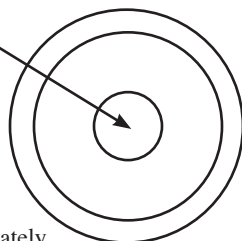
Thomas F. Torrance - “When God declared by His Word that we are righteous, we are righteous, for His Word makes it so. It is not an empty Word, but one that fulfills what it declares.”

James S. Stewart - “The very pronouncement of justification does, in point of fact, have the effect of making a man something he was not before. Justification carries life with it. ... “The heart of Paul’s religion is union with Christ ... more than justification, more than sanctification, more than reconciliation. Paul beheld Christ summoning and welcoming him into vital unity with Himself.”



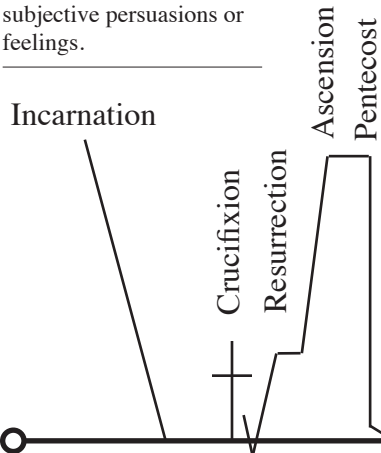
A Protestant “light” repudiated

Andreas Osiander (1498-1552) was an early ally of Martin Luther in the Protestant Reformation, but differed from Luther on the subject of “justification.” Osiander believed that the righteousness of a believer was accomplished, not just by objective imputation, but by the subjective indwelling of the living Christ – that the meaning of the Greek *dikaosune* could legitimately mean “to make righteous.” Osiander was eventually repudiated by both Martin Luther and John Calvin, and relegated to the *blacklist* of Protestant heretics. To this day Protestants are extremely afraid of his concept of an indwelling participation in the life of Christ.



Historical

The Christian faith has documentable historical foundation in the historical Person and work of Jesus Christ. It is not mere subjective persuasions or feelings.



Theological

Biblical Images:

- Liberation** – Jesus “released the captives” (Lk. 4:18) from “the domain of darkness” (Col. 1:13) and from “this present evil age” (Gal. 1:4). He freed mankind “from the Law” (Rom. 7:2,6) and “from their sins” (Rev. 1:5). The Son sets us free! (Jn. 8:36)
- Legal & Judicial** – God is Judge (Heb. 10:30; 12:23), and by the transgression of man’s sins (Rom. 5:15-19), “condemnation came upon all” (Rom. 5:16,18). A “day of judgment was fixed (Acts 17:31). Jesus our Advocate (I Jn. 2:1) effected forgiveness (Acts 10:43).
- Purification** – The sins of men were “red like crimson” (Isa. 1:18). By Christ’s atoning work we are “washed and sanctified” (I Cor. 6:11). Sins are “washed away” (Acts 27:16), and our hearts “cleansed by faith” (Acts 15:9) in “purification of sins” (Heb. 1:3).
- Sacrifice** – “Christ became “a sacrifice to God” (Eph. 5:2), offering “one sacrifice for sins for all time” (Heb. 10:12), to “put away sin by His sacrifice” (Heb. 9:26). He is “the Lamb of God taking away the sins of the world” (Jn 1:29) – the “Passover sacrifice” (I Cor 5:7).
- Compensation & Reparation** – The price had to be paid, “a certificate of debt” (Col. 2:14). “The Son of Man came to give His life a ransom” (Matt. 20:28; I Tim. 2:6). We were “bought with a price” (I Cor. 6:19,20; 7:23), “purchased with His blood” (Acts 20:28).
- Satisfaction** – “God sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins” (I Jn. 4:10; 2:1,2; Rom. 3:25; Heb. 2:17). God is satisfied with what Christ accomplished (Jn. 4:34; 5:36)
- Triumph** – In the cosmic conflict between God and Satan, Jesus “triumphed over the rulers and authorities” (Col. 2:15) and “overcame the world” (Jn. 16:33) and the Evil One.

Objective

A Balanced Perspective of the Gospel

Justification:

God in Christ “justifies the ungodly” (Rom. 4:5), for they are “justified in His blood” (Rom. 5:9), resulting in “justification of life to all men” (Rom. 5:16). There is no doubt that the Greek word for “justification” was often used in a legal context with the idea of forgiveness, acquittal, pardon, and the commutation of legal consequences. It often conveyed the idea of a declaration or pronouncement of “not guilty” before the law and of “right standing” before the authorities.

It is not legitimate, however, to maintain that the biblical concept of “justification” cannot also bear the concept of being “made righteous” subjectively by the presence of Jesus Christ, the Righteous One, dwelling within and united spiritually to the Christian.

Spiritual condition

- Regeneration - a receptive individual is “brought into being again” spiritually (Jn. 1:13; 3:3-8). The life of God is restored to a human individual - Jn. 1:12,13; 10:10; 14:6; I Jn. 3:14; 5:12. The Christian is indwelt by the Spirit of the living Lord Jesus (II Cor. 13:5; Gal. 2:20; Eph. 3:17; Col. 1:27; I Jn. 3:24).
- The Christian is a “partaker of Christ” (Heb. 3:14)
- The Christian is united with the Spirit of Christ (I Cor. 6:17).
- The Christian is a “partaker of the divine nature” (II Pet. 1:4)
- The Christian has a new spiritual identity as:
- new creature - II Cor. 5:17; Gal. 6:16
 - new man - Eph. 4:24; Col. 3:10
 - child of God - Jn. 1:12; Rom. 8:16; I Jn. 3:1,2,10
 - Christ-one/Christian - Acts 11:26; 26:28; I Pet. 4:16
- The Christian has been “made righteous” by the presence of the Righteous One, Jesus Christ, in his spirit (Rom. 5:19; I Cor. 1:30; II Cor. 5:21; Heb. 12:23 - Acts 3:14; 7:52; 22:14)
- Those who share “the mystery of Christ in you” (Col. 1:26,27), and explain the Christian’s “union with Christ” (I Cor. 6:17), are improperly identified as “mystics, subjectivists, experientialists, existentialists, etc. in their legitimate attempt to explain the subjective interiority of the Christian gospel.

Experiential

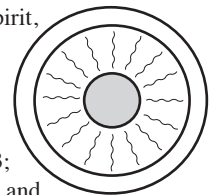
Behavioral expression

- The purpose of spiritual regeneration is to allow the life and character of the living Lord Jesus to be expressed in psychological and physical behavior.
- **Character** of Christ expressed in the process of sanctification - the manifestation of the holy character of God by the life of the living Lord Jesus (II Cor. 4:10,11).
- Filled with the Spirit - Eph. 5:18
- Live by the Spirit - Gal. 5:25
- Live godly in Christ Jesus - II Tim. 3:12
- Fruit of the Spirit - Gal. 5:22,23
- Fruit of righteousness - Eph. 5:9; Phi. 1:11; Jn. 15:1-8
- **Ministry** of Christ expressed in the Christian (Rom. 15:18).
- Spiritual giftedness - Rom. 12; I Cor. 12; Eph. 4
- Intercession for others - I Jn. 4:17
- Christ lives out His life through the Christian, in like manner as God the Father lived and acted through the man, Jesus Christ - (Jn. 14:10; Acts 2:22)
- Functional salvation. “Having been reconciled,” the Christian is “saved by His life” (Rom. 5:10), and “reigns in life through Christ (Rom. 5:17).

Subjective

Behavioral conflicts

- Trials** – The Christian is not exempt from the trying situations and circumstances of life (I Peter 1:6-9; 4:12-19). “Count it all joy my brethren when you encounter various trials, knowing that testing of your faith produces endurance” (James 1:2).
- “Flesh”** – “old things have passed away, all things have become new” (II Cor. 5:17) when we became “new creature.” “The flesh sets its desires against the Spirit, and the Spirit against flesh” (Gal. 5:17).
- The Christian’s God-given desires have been bent, twisted, and warped with selfish and sinful patterns. These “fleshly desires” (Rom. 13:14; Gal. 5:24; Eph. 2:3; I Pet. 2:11) are our patterned propensities and tendencies to sin. Spirit of Christ overcomes (Gal. 5:16,17).
- Temptation** – The satanic tempter tempts (I Cor. 7:5; I Th. 3:5) the Christian to misrepresent who he has become “in Christ.” God does not tempt the Christian (James 1:13,14), but the tempter solicits the Christian to sin by manifesting character contrary to the character of God in our behavior.
- Important to recognize that temptation is not sin, and that God provides our sufficiency to resist (I Cor. 10:13; James 4:7; I Jn. 4:4).



Over-generalize the incarnation - "God became man"
 - Deity became humanity.
 God subsumed humanity into Himself - to the extent that K. Barth can refer to "The Humanity of God."
 All of mankind participated in the *hypostatic* union of humanity and deity in the Person of Jesus Christ.
 God henceforth operates humanity vicariously - on our behalf, "as us," "in our place."
 "Vicarious humanity" - God substitutes for us.
 Integrative theology. Wholesale transfer of humanity into divine function. Abduction, expropriation of humanity.
 Deprivation of human response-ability.
 Humanity incorporated into the Godhead.

Vicarious death of Christ "on behalf of" all mankind - "in our place." When He died, we died. He died "as us."
 Vicarious resurrection of Christ. When He rose, we rose.
 Vicarious ascension of Christ, whereby we are "seated in the heavenlies" in Him.
 Vicarious election of all men in Christ.
 Vicarious righteousness of all men in Christ. Wholesale justification. Imposed righteousness.
 Vicarious at-one-ment with God through Christ.
 Universal reconciliation of mankind with God.
 Universal salvation of the world of mankind.
 Redemption is redefined as the work of the Holy Spirit to bring men into awareness of their inclusion.

Christomonism. - Jesus is the "Master Man," the "Elect man," the "One Man" into whom all humanity is identified, subsumed and incorporated.
 Mediation of Christ for all men.
 "Jesus has taken responsibility for the fallenness of humanity." He has taken all men into Himself; into His arms; in order to "present them to the Father as 'right' in His eyes."
 All humanity is 'adopted' into God's family by a collective inclusion 'in Christ.' Incorporated into Christ.
 This is a form of "integrative theology." Jesus Christ has replaced every man, both historically and in subsequent objectified experience.

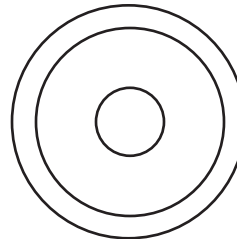
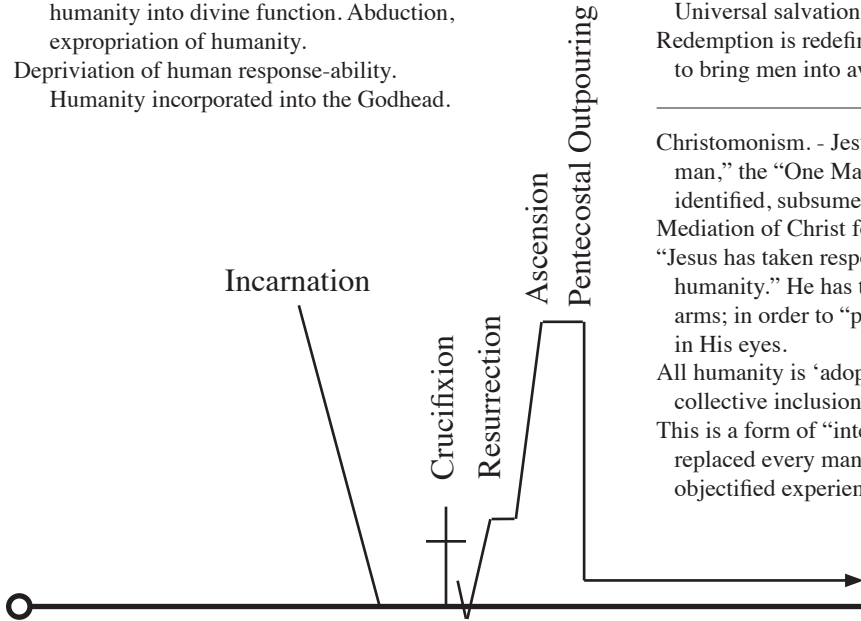
Subsumptive-Incorporative-Vicarious Theology

- All men are "**in Christ,**" as an extension of His incarnated humanity. The "Vicarious Humanity" of Jesus Christ.
- All men are incorporated "into Christ" - a relationship of incorporation (rather than genuine personal relationship)
 - Vicarious life of Christ in Christian
 - Vicarious function of Christ "as us"
 - Vicarious repentance of Christ in Christian.
 - Vicarious faith of Christ in Christian.
 - Vicarious personhood of Christ in Christian.
 - Vicarious sanctification of Christ in Christian.
 - Vicarious righteousness of Christ in Christian
 - Vicarious worship of Christ in Christian.
 - Vicarious prayer of Christ in Christian.

Christ IS our life.
 Christ IS our righteousness.
 Christ IS our sanctification
 Christ is the live-er of the Christian life.
 "Not I who live, but Christ lives in me" - Gal. 2:20
 Christ is the faith-er in the Christian life.
 Christ is the pray-er in the Christian life.
 Christ is the worship-er in the Christian life.
 The risen Lord Jesus is the total functionality of the Christian life.
 Jesus takes responsibility for the Christian life "on our behalf."
 Christians are subsumptively integrated into Christ's experience.

Perichoresis - dancing around in same space.
 Disallows identification of objective/subjective

Universal glorification of ALL subsumed humanity. — Universalism.



Subjective

Individuals just need to 'recognize,' open their eyes, and 'reckon' that they 'in Christ.'
 Faith is the acceptance of incorporative inclusion, in order to *experience* assurance.
 The only real choice men have is to "opt out" - reject their inclusion.
 People are just 'prodigals' who need to return home.

- Continued diminishment of human responsibility - response-ability.
- Lack of awareness of derivative anthropological function.
- Continued reticence to admit subjective indwelling of Spirit of Christ.
- Perpetuates an over-objectified soteriology (though not forensic/legal).
- Perpetuates one-sided Divine determinism. (Augustinian/Calvinism)
- Perpetuates inadequate anthropological understanding - views humanity as collective whole, rather than as individuals.
- Perpetuates a theology that begins with what God *does*, rather than who God *IS*. God determines to incorporate all humanity into Himself.
- Perpetuates a 'transactional' view of spirituality.

Subsumptive/Incorporative/Vicarious Theology is a contemporary theological approach that seeks to address the excesses of the legal/forensic context of Protestant thought.

It remains, however, an adapted form of Augustinian/Calvinist/Reformed theology. It retains the premise of Divine determinism and the diminishment/denial of human responsibility.

There is a cerebral and academic capitulation to the over-objectification of Protestant theology.

Unwilling to consent to the subjective reality of the indwelling presence of the Godhead within mankind, and the subjective spiritual union of Christ and the Christian.